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Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

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 Thursday, 5 September 2002, 10.30 a.m.
 New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Passy	(Bulgaria)
<i>Members:</i>	Cameroon	Mr. Tidjani
	China	Mr. Zhang Yishan
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Guinea	Mr. Boubacar Diallo
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Mexico	Ms. Lajous
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Singapore	Mr. Yap
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999).

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President: As this is the first meeting of the Security Council for the month of September, I should like to take this opportunity to pay tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. John D. Negroponte, Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of August 2002. I am sure I speak for all members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Negroponte for the great diplomatic skill with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Denmark, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Šahović (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), took a seat at the Council table; Ms. Løj (Denmark), Mr. Kerim (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) and Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Annabi to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

I now give the floor to Mr. Annabi.

Mr. Annabi: I am pleased to have this opportunity, as you requested, Sir, to provide the Security Council with a briefing on developments which have occurred in Kosovo since Mr. Michael Steiner, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, last briefed the Council on 30 July.

During this period, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) has continued its efforts to uphold the rule of law. It has moved forward in its preparations for the municipal elections to be held on 26 October and has also continued to work on creating conditions conducive to the return of minority communities. I will now deal with each of these aspects successively.

As regards efforts to uphold the rule of law, I should like to begin by recalling UNMIK's efforts in this regard over the past few weeks. Last month, investigations that had been under way for some time led to the issuance of indictments and to the arrest by UNMIK Police of several former members of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) — including some prominent ones — on charges of crimes committed against fellow Kosovo Albanians in 1999.

On 8 August, an international prosecutor indicted seven former KLA members held in detention since their arrest on 18 June on charges of unlawful detention and inflicting grievous bodily harm against Kosovo Albanians in the Pec region back in 1999.

In addition to these charges, one suspect was charged with murder. Those indicted included Daut Haradinaj, the suspended Chief of General Staff of the Kosovo Protection Corps and brother of Ramush Haradinaj, leader of the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo.

Several days later, five of the suspects were indicted on additional but separate charges of

endangering public safety during an incident in which gunfire was exchanged in July 2000. That indictment also covered Ramush Haradinaj. Due to the relatively minor nature of the charges against him, however, Mr. Haradinaj has not been arrested. He has said that he will answer the charges against him in a court of law.

On the 11 of August, United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) police arrested Rustem Mustafa, also known as Commander Remi, a former high-ranking officer of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), on suspicion of illegally detaining, torturing and murdering five Kosovo Albanians in 1998 and 1999. This indictment stemmed from an investigation that led to the arrest of three former KLA members in January this year. Rustem Mustafa remains in custody after an international judge ordered his detention for a further 30 days on 13 August.

During the same period, on 8 August, UNMIK police and KFOR attempted, albeit unsuccessfully, to arrest Milan Ivanovic, the leader of the Serb National Council of Mitrovica, on charges of attempted murder during the violent demonstrations of 8 April in Mitrovica in which 22 UNMIK police officers were injured. On 20 August, UNMIK requested the Serbian Ministry of the Interior to take the necessary steps to arrest Mr. Ivanovic, who is still at large, should he be found in Serbia proper. We understand that Mr. Ivanovic has demanded certain guarantees from UNMIK and the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia regarding the judicial handling of his case as a condition for submitting to the Kosovo judiciary.

KFOR carried out several arrests of its own during the period under review. On 8 August, KFOR arrested 19 Kosovo Albanians in the Gnjilane region in the context of its efforts to prevent armed extremist activities along the border with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Three days later, 17 of those 19 Kosovo Albanians were subsequently released due to lack of evidence.

On 12 August, KFOR arrested three Kosovo Albanians in Pristina on suspicion of recruiting other Kosovo Albanians for armed activities in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Three more were arrested the following day. KFOR has said that most individuals thought to be seeking to recruit for, or organize, any armed activity related to the former

Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will be kept in detention until the elections, scheduled for 15 September, are over.

At the beginning of August, KFOR also arrested three Algerian nationals on charges of photographing KFOR installations in the Gnjilane region; two more were arrested on 16 August. The Algerian Embassy in Belgrade has been informed of the arrests.

Prime Minister Rexhepi expressed full support for KFOR's actions, and reiterated that violence in Kosovo or against the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia could not be tolerated.

The reaction to UNMIK's arrests of former KLA members was, however, predictably more adverse. A number of organized public demonstrations were held in different locations to protest the arrests. These demonstrations largely occurred without incident. One protest, however, turned violent. In Decani, on 15 August, around 150 demonstrators had to be dispersed with tear gas by UNMIK police and a number of injuries were incurred by both UNMIK police and the demonstrators. President Rugova spoke out immediately against this violence against the international community, and used his influence to calm down the situation.

Reflecting the sentiment in some Kosovo Albanian quarters, Mr. Rexhepi issued a statement on 19 August, calling on UNMIK to stop the arrests, characterizing those arrested or indicted as "political prisoners and hostages to the political process". The statement also questioned UNMIK's jurisdiction over crimes committed prior to its establishment in June 1999.

The Kosovo Serb community in Kosovo and the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia also characterized the indictment against Milan Ivanovic as political in nature, and there have been protests in the northern part of Mitrovica.

UNMIK has acted to calm down emotions and to dispel the idea that it was intentionally targeting former KLA members. It issued a measured statement, focusing on its commitment to the rule of law. It also briefed representatives of Member States in Pristina, and statements in support of UNMIK were subsequently made by the United States, the Russian Federation and the European Union.

The Principal Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Charles Brayshaw, together with the commander of KFOR, Lieutenant-General Valentin, explained the details behind the arrests to Prime Minister Rexhepi, to President of the Kosovo Assembly Nexhet Daci, and to members of the Kosovo Serb Return Coalition. During these discussions, UNMIK emphasized the independence of the judiciary in Kosovo, which has full authority to act on crimes committed prior to the adoption of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

Since then, the reaction of Kosovo Albanian leaders and the media has been toned down. Prime Minister Rexhepi called for the immediate cessation of protests against the international community, intimating that the response should be an institutional one rather than street protests, and in a meeting with Mr. Steiner on 1 September he reaffirmed the Government's commitment to continued cooperation with UNMIK.

The leader of the Democratic Party of Kosovo, Hashim Thaci, has also spoken against the use of violence, and stated that immunity did not apply automatically to all who participated in the war. The head of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), Mr. Ceku, predictably condemned the arrests of former KLA and KPC members, but also advocated peaceful debate and discussion as the way forward. The protests that have continued — with a few hundred demonstrators on average — have been well controlled.

I would like to turn now to developments in other priority areas, including the building of functioning democratic institutions and the preparation of the upcoming municipal elections. On 8 August, Mr. Steiner convened a special panel, headed by an international legal expert, to consider Kosovo Serb objections to the higher education bill adopted by the Assembly in July. This was the first time that this mechanism, which is provided for by the Constitutional Framework to protect the rights of minority communities, has been invoked. On 9 August the special panel recommended the licensing of the University of Northern Mitrovica and urged the Kosovo Serb community to take measures to integrate its establishment into a unified education structure. These recommendations will be presented for the Assembly's consideration when it reconvenes after its summer recess.

Work has continued on building a professional civil service. The Senior Public Appointments Committee has approved the appointment of Permanent Secretaries to five of the 11 ministries. Efforts are under way to complete the recruitment to these important positions.

Seventy thousand people have now applied for, and 21,000 beneficiaries from all communities have started to receive, a basic pension, following the promulgation by Mr. Steiner of the law on basic pensions passed by the Kosovo Assembly at the end of June.

Turning to the municipal elections, preparations for them are proceeding smoothly. The voter service operation, which is the process of updating the voters list, came to a close on 23 August. By that date, around 3,400 new voters had registered in Serbia proper and in Montenegro. Although this number may appear low, it is partly attributable to the fact that for last year's Assembly elections, approximately 104,000 people registered to vote in person from outside Kosovo. An important aspect of this year's voter service operation was the transfer of electoral responsibilities to local institutions. The municipal election commissions have had an expanded role and taken the lead in carrying out voter service activities.

As of the end of August, the Central Election Commission had certified 500 out of a total of 5,500 candidates from all communities, with the remaining candidates slated for certification by the end of this week. The candidates come from a broad range of political entities, including 25 political parties, 23 citizens' initiatives, nine independent candidates and one coalition. Of these entities, 21 are Kosovo Albanian, 26 are Kosovo Serb, five are Roma, Egyptian or Ashkali, five are Bosniac or Gorani, and one is from Kosovo's Turkish community.

The electoral campaign is scheduled to begin on 10 September. Despite divisions in opinion regarding the recent arrests, political leaders from all communities have called for the elections to be inclusive and to take place in a peaceful and calm environment.

The Serbian authorities have requested that Kosovo Serbs in Kosovo be enabled to vote in the Serbian presidential elections, which are scheduled for 29 September. As was the case with the federal and Serbian elections in September and December 2000,

respectively, UNMIK will not stand in the way of the Kosovo Serbs' exercising their right to vote.

I now wish to turn to the return of internally displaced persons. In August, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) arranged the first go-and-see visit, as they are called, of Kosovo Serb internally displaced persons in Serbia proper to the town of Pristina. The group was given a warm reception by the Kosovo Albanian Vice-President of the Pristina Municipal Assembly, among others. There are plans to continue such visits to Pristina on a regular basis.

The Gnjilane region has seen a considerable increase in spontaneous returns over the summer. While return is of course welcome, unorganized return can have adverse consequences. This was unfortunately seen in Klokot, in the Gnjilane region, the day after Mr. Steiner briefed the Council at the end of July. On 31 July, there was a series of five explosions in an area primarily inhabited by Kosovo Serbs, in which two KFOR soldiers were injured. UNMIK has established a fund to support inter-ethnic community improvement projects in the affected village and is working to establish a mechanism to handle spontaneous returns more effectively.

In this context, recent statements by Kosovo Serb internally displaced persons that they are planning to block the crossing points on the administrative boundary line with Kosovo later this month if they are not allowed to return en masse are cause for concern. Although the impatience of internally displaced persons is understandable, given the still delicate state of inter-communal relations, any action along those lines would only be counterproductive and would be harmful to the returns process.

There cannot be artificial mass return. UNMIK's return policy is based on the right of individual return in an organized way so that it can be sustainable. This requires careful preparation on the ground to ensure that the physical infrastructure — meaning houses, employment and access to public services — is in place to welcome the returnees. It also requires a careful handling of relations with the neighbouring Kosovo Albanian communities to diminish the potential for return-related security incidents.

The incident in Klokot illustrates the fragility of the reconciliation and confidence-building process and underlines the importance of inter-communal dialogue.

There were several other incidents against Kosovo Serbs during the period under review that have also caused concern. On 29 August Kosovo Serb woodcutters in the Pec region reported being attacked and shot at by unidentified gunmen. UNMIK police and the Kosovo Police Service responded and were forced to call for KFOR reinforcements as the situation escalated and the firing continued. It is suspected that the situation occurred as part of ongoing protests in the area by Kosovo Albanians regarding the amount of timber being collected by Kosovo Serbs.

One of the greatest obstacles to the implementation of returns-related projects is the lack of funding. In order to address this, UNMIK had extensive contact with the donor community in Kosovo during the past month and took representatives of donor countries and organizations on a visit to potential return sites.

I would like to say a word on relations with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. UNMIK has continued discussions with the authorities of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to find practical ways of addressing the concerns of Kosovo farmers in the border area. A decision was reached in principle to open two new border crossing points through which the farmers would have access to the affected lands on the basis of an UNMIK travel document. The location of these new border crossing points is still under discussion.

Turning now to the energy situation in Kosovo, Council members will recall the unfortunate lightning strike that resulted in extensive fire damage at the power plant in Obilic, near Pristina, in July. Since then, the investigation has revealed that the extent of the damage was attributable to negligence in the management of the site. As extensive repairs to the damaged section of the station began, Mr. Steiner appointed an international expert to manage the situation. The appointment of a temporary Managing Director is intended to depoliticize the issue and to place the emphasis on the practical issues that need to be addressed.

The damage means that Kosovo — yet again, unfortunately — faces critical energy shortages as we approach the winter. A speedy response from donors, supplemented by the Kosovo consolidated budget, has enabled repairs to begin on one part of the facility, which will, it is hoped, be completed by the beginning

of December. Another part of the station, however, cannot be operational until the summer of next year at the earliest. The Government is pursuing a strategy to reduce public consumption and to encourage conservation through an energy savings campaign.

In conclusion, as I have tried to show in this briefing, there was some tension over the past month as a result of the arrests that have taken place. UNMIK believes that the Kosovo Albanian leadership now has a better understanding that those arrests were the result of lengthy investigations carried out in accordance with well-established judicial procedures, and took place without regard for ethnic or political affiliation. In addition, Prime Minister Rexhepi has assured UNMIK of the leadership's continued support for the firm line taken by UNMIK and KFOR in their efforts to uphold the rule of law. I would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the statements of support issued by Council members and by the European Union, which UNMIK found very helpful. UNMIK will continue to rely on the Council's support in its efforts to consolidate the rule of law in Kosovo.

As the provisional institutions return from the summer recess, they will face a formidable list of tasks that need to be accomplished: coping with the energy situation, finishing the recruitment of candidates to fulfil important civil service functions, and passing legislation on a whole range of other issues. We look forward to their productive engagement in tackling those issues together with UNMIK. At the same time, as the election campaign nears, UNMIK will be looking to the elected representatives to ensure that the lead-up to the second round of municipal elections is free of violence and is conducted in an atmosphere of inclusion and tolerance.

Mr. Tidjani (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): The delegation of Cameroon would like to express to Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, its great appreciation for his up-to-date and highly informative briefing on the situation in Kosovo. We followed his presentation with the greatest attention.

Speaking at the Council meeting on Kosovo of 30 June 2002, my delegation stressed the need to capitalize on all the positive signs that had emerged from the report of the Secretary-General (S/2002/779), in order to consolidate the still-fragile outlines of a rebirth of normal activity in Kosovo. We pointed out

that strengthening security, disarming all armed groups and encouraging the return of all minorities should be the priorities. Today, we note that, thanks to the dedication of the men and women caring for Kosovo, the implementation of those priorities is already beginning to bear fruit.

We have also seen remarkable progress in strengthening the rule of law throughout the territory of Kosovo in the fight against insecurity and crime in all its forms. My delegation supports the plan for regional cooperation in the fight against organized crime, which, however, cannot achieve the anticipated results unless the police and justice services now being created or restructured respond positively to the hopes placed in them. In that regard, the current situation augurs well for a promising future, although on the judicial level it still requires increased cooperation among all sociopolitical elements as well as among the subregional authorities.

Mr. Steiner, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Kosovo, told us after the parliamentary and presidential elections that he felt the time had come, in the context of the new phase of the United Nations operation, to gradually transfer authority in Kosovo to the institutions of provisional self-government without prejudging the future political status of the province. We gave him our support, as did other Council members. We now reaffirm that support, and we call upon the Kosovo authorities to respect scrupulously their mandate, which is defined by the Constitutional Framework. That is the only way for this process to progress harmoniously and according to the established programme.

Kosovo will be a province of law or it will not exist. Recent incidents which led to highly regrettable statements by the Kosovo authorities deserve to be condemned with the utmost energy. The fragile rebirth of a democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo, under the guidance of the United Nations, deserves to be strengthened and strongly supported. Certainly, the return to normalcy in Kosovo will be a long process in which patience, perseverance and, above all, tact will be the virtues necessary in order to bring Kosovo into the great family of the Balkans, purged of its ancient demons of hatred, violence and war.

To reach at that final stage, we must pass through other crucial intermediary phases. One is the organization of the municipal elections scheduled for

26 October 2002. We express our appreciation for the process set up by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) with a view to enabling wide participation in those elections, including by voters outside Kosovo, all in a spirit of order and transparency. At this stage, my delegation cannot subscribe to any idea that would hamper the laborious work under way to achieve reconciliation among all the components of Kosovo's population. The delegation of Cameroon appeals to all of sociopolitical sectors to take part, without conditions, in this third electoral phase. We should also like to take this opportunity to say that my delegation noted Mr. Steiner's invitation to Security Council members to take part on the ground in the elections scheduled for 26 October.

The extension of UNMIK's authority throughout Kosovo and respect for the rule of law are the aspects that, in our view, deserve particular attention in future United Nations action in that province. More than ever, the success of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo depends on cooperation: the cooperation of all sociopolitical components in Kosovo, the cooperation of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and the cooperation of the international community, including in financial terms.

Finally, my delegation reaffirms its appreciation and encouragement to all international organizations and to the members of UNMIK who are working daily on the ground for the advent of true peace in Kosovo.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are pleased, Sir, to see you, the Foreign Minister of Bulgaria, in the Chair. We are grateful to your delegation for having taken the initiative to convene today's meeting to consider the problem of Kosovo in depth. We would also like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Hédi Annabi for his detailed briefing.

As was made clear in the briefing, the situation in and around Kosovo continues to be very difficult and requires that the international community give it constant attention and demonstrate its proactive involvement in it. We note with satisfaction the success that has been achieved by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) under the leadership of Michael Steiner to establish the institutions of provisional self-government in the

province, to resolve outstanding economic and social problems, to establish a dialogue with the Serbian Return Coalition and to develop cooperation with the Belgrade Government.

However, local authorities still have a long way to go before we can seriously start talking about consolidation of the day-to-day workings of Kosovo's institutions of self-government and about the principle of multi-ethnicity. It remains a fact that there are still frequent cases of those bodies disregarding the interests of minorities, which could have a negative impact on the level of minority participation in the upcoming municipal elections. If that happens, we will not have the balance needed to create the conditions for the further normalization of daily life in Kosovo.

The situation regarding inter-ethnic relations is already alarming. Efforts by UNMIK to establish the necessary conditions for the return of minorities have so far not produced significant results. Mr. Annabi has mentioned how delicate this problem is. In fact, according to assessments by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), one of the most problematic areas in terms of ethnically motivated violence, is the south-east sector of Kosovo, namely, the Klokot area. According to NATO reports, which are available from Brussels, there are still cases of intimidation and of trying to instil fear in Serbs. Explosions and house burnings also continue to take place there. Obviously, similar actions, including the examples just given by Mr. Annabi, are aimed at expelling Serbs from the province. That is of course intolerable.

We resolutely support the efforts of Michael Steiner to consolidate the rule of law in Kosovo. However, it is quite clear that the United Nations Mission in Kosovo is still facing many serious problems in this area. We believe the main problem is the deliberate resistance by the criminalized segment of society, principally by former fighters of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and members of other radical nationalist groups. The fact is that those groups have representatives in Kosovo's governing structures. It is precisely those groups that provoked the disturbances in Pristina and a number of other places by protesting legitimate actions taken by UNMIK and KFOR police to arrest former KLA commanders and people who had committed serious crimes.

We are convinced that, strictly in keeping with resolution 1244 (1999), UNMIK should continue to

take robust action to restore order in the province and to establish law and order. In that regard, UNMIK should staunchly protect its staff from all kinds of insinuation and should counter any attempts to discredit them, including politically motivated attempts. We believe that the Security Council should help create the necessary political background and stop any attacks on international staff performing the tasks entrusted to them. Attempts by Kosovo's institutions of self-government to call into question the legitimacy of UNMIK's efforts to combat crime and extremism are also inadmissible. In fact, the representative of Cameroon has just mentioned this point. I agree with his position regarding the need to condemn such attempts.

The question of Mitrovica continues to be an acute problem. We are convinced that we need to use exclusively political methods to resolve this matter, in close contact with Belgrade and without any use of force or type of coercion. The situation in Mitrovica is very sensitive. It is important that the international presence act in a very responsible manner and that it avoid any rash or improperly thought out action.

There is another unresolved problem: the demarcation of the Yugoslavia-Macedonia border in keeping with the Agreement concluded between Belgrade and Skopje. The demarcation of the Kosovo section of that border will be possible only with the direct participation of UNMIK. Once again, we call for an acceleration of the start of the work that must be done in this regard. This is an important matter, which needs to be resolved; it is being delayed in an unjustified way.

Speaking in this Chamber last April, Michael Steiner and the head of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/Serbia Coordinating Centre for Kosovo and Metohija, Mr. Čović, invited members of the Security Council to visit Kosovo in order to get to know the situation on the ground and to assess the progress made. We think such a visit would be timely and could perhaps take place in November after the holding of municipal elections. Of course, the mission would also visit Belgrade to make contact with the leadership of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We think that sending a Security Council mission would make it possible once again to demonstrate strong support for UNMIK's work to secure full implementation of resolution 1244 (1999). Such a mission would also

serve to reaffirm the international community's commitment to a comprehensive settlement.

The President: I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for his kind words addressed to me and to my country.

Mr. Doutriaux (France) (*spoke in French*): I wish to pay tribute to you, Sir, for personally presiding over our work on Kosovo today. I also wish to thank Hédi Annabi for his very complete briefing on the situation in Kosovo.

As Mr. Annabi has told us, a few weeks away from municipal elections in Kosovo, we find ourselves at a crossroads once again. Those elections will surely present a new test of inter-ethnic reconciliation in Kosovo. However, as Mr. Annabi has also told us, some tension has emerged in the wake of several arrests in recent weeks. This shows that we still have some important tasks to accomplish in the near future and that there are still obstacles to be overcome.

France supports the statement to be made by the Danish presidency of the European Union. I would therefore simply wish to emphasize two points.

First, with regard to the important aspects of human rights, security, combating organized crime and so forth covered by Mr. Annabi, the message from the entire Security Council must be one of unanimous support for the efforts of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), KFOR and Special Representative Michael Steiner. They are carrying out an active policy of restoring the rule of law, fighting crime and, as Ambassador Lavrov has just noted, combating inter-ethnic incidents and actions taken against members of other ethnic groups. We must give full support to UNMIK in this.

We are gratified by what Mr. Annabi explained to us, that among the Kosovar authorities there is now a greater understanding of UNMIK's action to restore the rule of law. The fact remains that the European Union did express regret at the statement made on 19 August by the Kosovo Government in that respect. But I understand that things are now improving and that UNMIK's action is better understood today.

UNMIK's action to restore the rule of law involves all ethnicities. The support we give to UNMIK's activities in this regard applies to actions by both sides. It is important to recall this today.

A second point concerns the elections, which will be an important test on 26 October. We are pleased to hear from Mr. Annabi that preparations are proceeding well, that many voters have already registered, whatever their ethnic affiliations, and that many candidates have already come forward. The Serbian authorities have called upon the Serb community to participate fully in the elections. This is, of course, a very good thing. The international community, the Security Council, will be following the conduct of the elections very closely. For us, this will be another test in the restoration of a fully normal situation in Kosovo.

Let me conclude by briefly recalling my country's important commitment to Kosovo in UNMIK and KFOR. The French Minister for Foreign Affairs will be in Kosovo on 7 September and, the day before, in neighbouring Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The President: I thank the representative of France for his kind words addressed to me and to my country.

Mr. Yap (Singapore): We are pleased and honoured to see you, Mr. President, presiding over this meeting. It confirms the importance that Bulgaria attaches to the Kosovo issue.

We would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his useful update on the situation in Kosovo. It is right that he highlighted adverse reactions to the recent arrests of former members of the Kosovo Liberation Army and the unsuccessful planned arrest of Milan Ivanovic. We condemn these negative reactions, and we welcome and support the efforts to calm down the situation.

To suggest that there are political motivations in the actions of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), and to stage protests against them, is not only destabilizing; it is also a direct challenge to UNMIK's authority in enforcing the rule of law in Kosovo. This is of great concern, more so since establishing the rule of law is central to any peacekeeping operation. Listed as one of the benchmark areas for the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999), the rule of law is a key condition for the readiness of Kosovo society and institutions to establish a process for determining the final status of the territory.

The benchmarks document prepared by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr.

Steiner, is clear on what the rule of law entails. Explicit guidelines on what needs to be accomplished under the rule of law demonstrate the usefulness of the benchmarks process as a tool for measuring progress and directing the way forward.

At the last public meeting on Kosovo, we made the point that the benchmarks process appeared to have already contributed to substantial progress in a number of critical areas, such as responsible Government institutions, law and order, and return and reconciliation of displaced persons. However, we also noted that much more remained to be done to bring security, stability and advancement to the province, and that the vision of an all-inclusive multi-ethnic society was still some distance away. In this regard we hope that the negative reactions to the arrests will not lead Kosovo in the opposite direction from the vision that Mr. Steiner has set out for the province. We call on the Kosovo leaders to play their part in strengthening respect for the rule of law and for UNMIK's authority in Kosovo.

As the Security Council regularly discusses Kosovo, we would encourage deeper reflection and analysis of the benchmark areas to ascertain the trends and any threats that may emerge. Reinforcing and preventive actions can then be taken as necessary. The unhealthy situation in Mitrovica and some other parts of Kosovo and the plaguing energy problem are issues of particular concern. We note from Mr. Annabi's briefing the potential threat looming on the horizon of ethnic Serb displaced persons blocking crossing points at the Kosovo administrative border. This could undermine the returns programme and efforts to reintegrate the ethnic Serbs and other minorities into Kosovo society. We urge UNMIK, Belgrade and the Kosovo leaders to make their best efforts to resolve these problems.

The President: I thank the representative of Singapore for his kind words addressed to my country and myself.

Mr. Cunningham (United States): I would like to welcome you, Foreign Minister Passy, to the Security Council and to express our appreciation to you for chairing this meeting. I also want to thank Mr. Annabi for his briefing.

I wish to address briefly the three main categories of issues that Mr. Annabi raised, because they are all-important at this stage of developments in Kosovo.

The first is the question of the rule of law. We have long called for and supported the efforts of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to strengthen the rule of law. We believe that that is a fundamental project that needs to be realized. We believe that UNMIK handled the recent arrests and prosecutions fairly, without prejudice to any group, and we strongly expect all leaders in Kosovo and the region to cooperate in efforts to prosecute serious crime. We regretted Prime Minister Rexhepi's initial statements criticizing UNMIK in speaking of political prisoners, but we welcome his call to end protests and his expressed commitment to work with UNMIK. I note there was considerable support from many of Kosovo's political leaders and intellectuals in support of the arrests. Some called for Kosovo's leaders to act responsibly through the provisional institutions of self-government, and not through mobs in the street. We were encouraged by these statements, which reflect a commitment to the benchmark process launched by Special Representative Steiner, which we strongly support. As for Mr. Ivanovic, we trust that he will be apprehended in the near future.

With regard to political process and elections, in our view much more needs to be done to deepen Kosovo's provisional institutions of self-government. For example, we would like to see the Assembly meet on a set schedule and forego the temptation to react on an ad hoc basis to the latest headlines. We are pleased that preparations for elections seem to be on track and that there are positive signs that support continues to grow in Kosovo for a democratic Government that represents all communities. We are pleased that 72 parties and other political entities, including more than 30 representing Serb and minority communities, have already registered for the Kosovo municipal elections in October.

Regarding refugees, we are also encouraged by continued progress on the return of refugees and internally displaced persons. Providing real opportunities for returns, together with sustainable solutions for these vulnerable populations, is a necessary component of long-term stability. Unfortunately, we are all aware that this will take some time. We are concerned about calls for unorganized mass returns that would be irresponsible and destabilizing. This is not the way to promote multi-ethnic democracy in Kosovo, and I agree completely with Mr. Annabi that this would be counterproductive

and harmful to the return process. We need careful preparation and sustainable returns in order to create the kind of stability that I am sure we all want to see.

In sum, we believe that the focus in the months ahead should be on making progress on the benchmarks, continuing the important work that has been done on returns and supporting participation by all groups in Kosovo's municipal elections in October.

The Resident: I thank the representative of the United States for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I too, Mr. Minister, wish to begin by welcoming you to this meeting of the Security Council, especially as we are today addressing a subject of great significance to your region. In that connection, let me say that we appreciate the ongoing interest that Ambassador Tafrov and the rest of his delegation have taken in matters concerning the Balkans.

I also take this opportunity to thank Mr. Annabi for the information he has provided. Although there have been some moments of tension, on the whole we are pleased at the positive developments we see in Kosovo. Yet again, we reaffirm our support for and recognition of the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Steiner, and the personnel of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

Let me comment on a few points raised by Mr. Annabi. First, as others have consistently done today, we reiterate that it is necessary to strengthen the rule of law. The events of recent days relating to UNMIK's arrest of members of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and to the reactions to those arrests give cause for concern. The appeal to the community by Assembly President Daci and by Prime Minister Rexhepi to cease demonstrations and comply with UNMIK decisions has been very useful. It is all the more noteworthy considering that their initial reaction had been negative.

UNMIK and the new institutions must be able to establish the machinery needed to take appropriate measures to strengthen the rule of law, which can guarantee the consolidation of democracy in Kosovo. Here, we reaffirm that there can be no security without justice and that, without security, there can be no foundations for the building of a multi-ethnic society. We therefore appeal to UNMIK to pursue its work in

that direction, and we call upon the leaders of the Administration to support its activities without politicizing justice.

Secondly, let me turn to the problem of refugees and internally displaced persons. We are pleased to learn that the number of returns has increased under the UNMIK policy of encouraging individual rather than mass returns; people must be able to return to their homes in Kosovo with assurances of the safety, security and freedom of movement they need to return to a constructive life. In that regard, we call on the Serb community to think hard about the idea of a protest march to the Kosovo-Serbia border to exert pressure in favour of a massive return of refugees. The safety and security of refugees and displaced persons must be taken into account, thus promoting a returns policy guaranteeing personal safety, as UNMIK has been doing.

Colombia has always attached great importance to joint efforts at cooperation and dialogue between UNMIK and Belgrade, and we call upon the Belgrade leadership to continue working to find a final solution for Mitrovica. It is necessary to put an end to parallel structures in the region in order to guarantee the establishment of democratic institutions that will ensure the rule of law.

I wish finally to mention progress towards the holding of municipal elections. We are pleased that the number of candidates has grown, especially among those representing minorities. We shall all look forward to a transparent campaign leading to a positive result in terms of the consolidation of democracy. Likewise, we support the efforts of UNMIK to facilitate participation by Kosovo Serbs in the elections to be held in Yugoslavia.

The President: I thank the representative of Colombia for the kind words he addressed to my country, to me and, especially, to Ambassador Tafrov.

Mr. Wehbe (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Let me begin, Sir, by congratulating you warmly on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of September. We are pleased to see you, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria, presiding over this important meeting. At the same time our thanks go to Ambassador Tafrov for having taken the initiative to convene this meeting, especially because Bulgaria is located in the heart of

the Balkans and has always had a deep interest in all the important issues relating to that region.

My delegation wishes also to extend its thanks to His Excellency Ambassador John Negroponte, Permanent Representative of the United States, and to the other members of his delegation for the success with which they guided the work of the Council last month.

My thanks go also to Mr. Hédi Annabi for this morning's comprehensive and detailed briefing on the most recent developments in Kosovo.

Mr. Annabi spoke at some length about the arrests carried out by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK); we consider that these were of individuals suspected of having committed serious crimes and that they were not directed at any group to which those individuals belonged or with which they were otherwise affiliated. I reaffirm that UNMIK is proceeding in complete accordance with its mandate under Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), which charged it with the task of establishing the rule of law. Nor is the Mission's mandate limited to the provisions of that resolution or to the wishes of the international community at large; it also reflects the wishes of the population of Kosovo. These arrests were made following lengthy investigations by UNMIK that began in early 1999.

Moreover, UNMIK's activities over the past few years have demonstrated its keen interest in establishing democratic institutions and a stable society in Kosovo, guaranteeing the protection of all the people of Kosovo and aimed at enforcing the rule of law with a view to ensuring a better future for Kosovo. We look forward to the upcoming municipal elections in Kosovo with great hope that they will be democratic and will represent all factions, minorities and ethnic groups in a balanced manner. In this way, the atmosphere necessary to guarantee security and safety for all in Kosovo and to build the economic structures essential to meeting the needs of its people can be established.

In general, we support UNMIK's efforts under Mr. Steiner's leadership and therefore endorse the principle of establishing the rule of law and justice in Kosovo, in accordance with resolution 1244 (1999). We express the hope that the issue of the return of minorities will be accorded the necessary priority. This will help bring stability to Kosovo, avert various

problems for Kosovar society arising from its multiethnic nature, and protect it from all the negative aspects of extremism aimed essentially at tearing it apart. In order to further increase the growing number of returnees that we have seen recently, and which we welcome, it is thus necessary to protect the crossing points through which the returnees must pass on their way home and to keep the extremists away from those points.

We welcome Mr. Steiner's proposal, referred to by Ambassador Lavrov, to dispatch a Security Council mission in the near future in order to assess the situation first-hand, to identify various problems and to demonstrate genuine support for UNMIK's mandate and work.

The President: I thank the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for his kind words addressed to me, to my country and to my Ambassador here in New York.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): I would like to welcome you to New York, Sir, and to commend you for convening this meeting and presiding over it yourself. I congratulate Bulgaria on its assumption of the presidency of the Council.

I would like to thank Mr. Annabi for his briefing and, through him, Special Representative Steiner and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) for their efforts to implement resolution 1244 (1999), including the realization of benchmarks.

In particular, we fully support Mr. Steiner's efforts to establish the rule of law in Kosovo and UNMIK's firm policy when it comes to arresting individuals suspected of criminal activity, regardless of their ethnic or political affiliation. These tasks are clearly mandated in resolution 1244 (1999). Only by bringing criminals to justice can a society based on the rule of law be established.

Norway strongly emphasizes that political leaders in Kosovo must fully support UNMIK's efforts to enforce the rule of law in Kosovo. Allegations against UNMIK of having political motivations for the arrests are completely unacceptable, as is incitement to non-cooperation with UNMIK and any attack on personnel of the United Nations and the KFOR. We note that the Prime Minister and Assembly President have moderated earlier statements criticizing UNMIK's

arrests and urge them and other Kosovo Albanian leaders to work with UNMIK and KFOR to promote the rule of law, as well as to secure conditions for returns.

My Government is concerned about the financial situation of the Housing and Property Directorate. Regularization of property rights is a precondition for returns and economic investments, which are priority tasks for UNMIK. Norway welcomes the increased emphasis placed on the return of displaced persons by the Special Representative. At the same time, we encourage giving more attention and resources to the Housing and Property Directorate's work in order to increase efficiency and case processing. We also call upon donor nations to provide more resources to the Directorate. This would help in finding sustainable solutions for thousands of internally displaced persons currently living under harsh conditions and unable to return to their homes. Norway has contributed €375,000 and is now in the process of seconding five lawyers to the institution.

We understand that a large number of apartments belonging to displaced Kosovo Serbs and other minorities have been illegally occupied by other residents of Kosovo. This is a major challenge to the rule of law and the return internally displaced persons.

Norway welcomes progress in preparations for the local elections in October and prospects for broad participation from all communities in Kosovo. This election will be the third democratic election to be held in Kosovo since 2000. Previous experience shows that implementation of election results is a challenge. Elections are more than a technical exercise. Elected representatives and local administrations must assume responsibilities, demonstrate accountability and focus on the tasks mandated to them.

At the municipal level, this pertains first and foremost to the delivery of public services to the local communities. Allocations of resources must be done in a transparent way. The provisional institutions must promote civil society and human rights; this is also a responsibility for the municipal assemblies and their administrations. Not least, members of ethnic minorities and women must be secured proportionate representation in the local Governments, as well as meaningful participation as civil servants. Only in this way can the Special Representative's benchmarks for the realization of effective, representative and

functioning institutions throughout Kosovo be achieved.

The President: I thank the representative of Norway for his kind words addressed to my country.

Ms. Lajous (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for us to have you, Sir, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria, present and presiding over this meeting. Your presence emphasizes the importance that your country attaches to its participation in the Security Council.

I also wish to thank Mr. Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for the information he has provided on the activities of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

The province of Kosovo continues to pose a challenge to the international community, despite the enormous political and economic capital invested there. To speak of Kosovo is to speak of a project for peace that has at times been thwarted by events that recall the conflict from which it emerged.

My delegation supports the concept of a Kosovo without ethnic divisions. However, acts of aggression among groups have not ceased. Refugees of Serb origin who have decided to return to their homes face an adverse social environment, as demonstrated by the case of Stupelj. It is good to know that in the first half of this year, approximately 1,000 refugees returned to Kosovo. However, the total number of returnees has not reached 4,500 since 2000. Therefore we express the hope that the sustainable return programme will bring about better conditions for refugees returning to their homes in future years, and thus increase their number.

Mexico considers that the rule of law must be established in Kosovo, guaranteeing full respect for human rights. However, recent developments relating to the arrest of persons of Albania and Serb origin prompt us to think that despite the efforts of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and of the international community, we are still far from the day when Kosovars, without distinction, will have full confidence in their institutions. In particular, we regretted the reaction of the Provisional Government, which questioned the legitimacy of these acts.

In reiterating its support for UNMIK and the Kosovo Force (KFOR), Mexico expresses its

conviction that all persons who by virtue of their acts must appear before the courts should do so without distinctions, and with legal guarantees.

My delegation feels that unfortunate statements and acts of intolerance foment irrational and irreconcilable divisions among the citizens of the province. This is not the time to foment divisiveness. To the contrary, in a few weeks municipal elections will take place in Kosovo, and Kosovars will have another opportunity to express their democratic will in a peaceful way.

Democracy and the rule of law are the two concepts which in political practice complement and support each other. With regard to the rule of law, much remains to be done in Kosovo, especially as regards the administration of justice. Many of the problems faced by Kosovo could be overcome with the support of a trustworthy judicial system. The international community must make an effort to improve the administration of justice in the province without yielding to the temptation of employing a larger number of international judges.

All Kosovars and the international community are responsible for the future of the province. Many international and civil society organizations daily express their support for Kosovo, but that same international community wants to see greater inter-ethnic tolerance, stronger consolidation of democracy, and the establishment of the rule of law, under which human rights would be fully respected.

The President: I thank the representative of Mexico for her kind words addressed to Bulgaria and to me.

Mr. Zhang Yishan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): First of all I wish to welcome you, the Foreign Minister of Bulgaria, here today to preside over this meeting. I also wish to thank Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his comprehensive briefing.

Since the last meeting of the Security Council devoted to the question of Kosovo, the situation there has undergone many changes, some of which are encouraging while others are, regrettably, disturbing. The arrest of former Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) members who are crime suspects helps the establishment of justice in Kosovo. We support efforts made by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and KFOR in this regard.

At the same time we hope that UNMIK will intensify its investigative efforts and bring all perpetrators of crimes to justice in order to lay a solid foundation for a society based on the rule of law in Kosovo.

The Chinese delegation condemns all attacks against United Nations personnel and appeals to parties concerned to take necessary measures to ensure their safety. Our delegation has always been very concerned about the return of refugees and displaced persons. We have noted that recent developments have hampered the return of some ethnic minorities. We hope that UNMIK will consider this matter important and take effective measures to create an environment conducive to the return of refugees and create a favourable atmosphere for the October municipal election.

The President: I thank the representative of China for his kind words addressed to my country.

Mr. Eldon (United Kingdom): Thank you, Mr. President and Minister, and welcome to New York. It is very good to see you today presiding over this Council meeting, at which Hédi Annabi has, as usual, given us a most helpful and incisive briefing.

As the representative of Denmark will speak later on behalf of the European Union, I will limit myself to two or three key points, as Ambassador Doutriaux of France did earlier.

I would like to make it clear, right at the outset, that the United Kingdom continues to support Special Representative Steiner's standards-before-status approach — or, I suppose, bench-marking, in the vernacular. The key challenges in the coming months will be strengthening the rule of law — and I noted that Mr. Annabi was quite right to major on this aspect in his statement — economic progress, and creating the conditions to ensure sustainable returns of internally displaced persons.

On the rule of law, like other around this table we welcome the recent high-profile arrests by UNMIK police and KFOR. The Kosovo institutions' response to the arrest of former KLA members was not helpful, and we have said this publicly. Like others, we support the eventual arrest of Milan Ivanovic, and we call on the authorities in Belgrade to share information on his whereabouts. As we have said often in the Council, relations with Belgrade are an important and essential element in making UNMIK work.

We welcome Mr. Kovic's continued cooperation on Kosovo. This, and cooperation between Belgrade, UNMIK and the provisional institutions, is essential to regional security. We need to ensure further cooperation between Belgrade and Pristina in the search for the eventual arrest of Mr. Ivanovic. Recent messages of support of Mr. Ivanovic, coming out of Belgrade have been inconsistent with Belgrade's stated support for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

On refugee returns, we fully back UNMIK's rights-based approach for individual return of refugees and internally displaced persons to Kosovo. Individuals must decide for themselves whether — and if so, when — to return. Mass returns must not undermine an individual's right to choose. We consider recent call from Kosovo Serbs for crossing points into Kosovo to be blocked if there are no mass returns to be unhelpful, to say the least.

Finally, there is the economy, which will be a key foundation for Kosovo's future prosperity. We support plans for privatization as an aid for the encouragement of investment into Kosovo. We very much hope that a new director of the Kosovo Trust Agency will be appointed soon to take the privatization process forward.

In conclusion, I would want to encourage the early promulgation of the UNMIK regulation on ownership.

The President: I thank the representative of the United Kingdom for his kind words addressed to me.

Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius): Let me say first of all how pleased we are to see you, Mr. Minister, preside over the Council's deliberations today on this very important issue. Let me also thank Mr. Hédi Annabi for his very useful briefing.

It has been more than four years now since the landmark resolution 1244 (1999) was adopted and the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) was instituted to implement the provisions of this resolution. Since then, UNMIK personnel have been working relentlessly, sometimes in difficult circumstances, to fulfil their obligations. It is most unfortunate that UNMIK has been the subject of criticism by the Kosovo Assembly recently. Resolution 1244 (1999) specifically mandated UNMIK to bring peace and establish the rule of law in Kosovo.

Therefore, any arrests undertaken by UNMIK should not be seen or construed as being politically motivated, but as an essential part in the exercise of its duty, within the authority given to it by the Council.

Mauritius fully supports UNMIK and is fully confident that all the suspects arrested by UNMIK will have the chance for fair and objective justice as soon as possible. We call on the people of Kosovo to have full trust in, and to collaborate with, UNMIK in bringing peace and stability to the province for the benefit of all Kosovars, without discrimination. We encourage the Government of Kosovo to continue its close collaboration with UNMIK and KFOR, especially in the fight against organized crime and in solving other cases of criminal acts. We also support UNMIK in its effort to prevent any further escalation of last month's incidents and to uphold the rule of law as mandated by resolution 1244 (1999).

Municipal elections are due on 26 October, and the widest participation of all Kosovars is important to ensure a free, fair and democratic election. We call on all Kosovars, especially the Serb minority community, to participate fully in the process to ensure that they are represented at all levels of decision-making in the Government of Kosovo. It is also important for political leaders to refrain during their election campaigns from making statements in public that may destabilize the situation in the province. My delegation notes with satisfaction that preparations for the elections are going well, and we welcome the certification of Serb parties to participate in these forthcoming elections.

It is equally important to ensure the full success of these October elections. In this regard, we call on the Belgrade authorities to use all their influence on the Serb and other minority communities so that they may participate in great numbers during the forthcoming elections.

On the issue of refugees and internally displaced persons, we welcome the various steps taken by UNMIK to encourage their return. Though the return process has been rather slow, we hope that in the future, with the completion of the various projects under way and the availability of more facilities, the number of returnees will increase considerably.

As regards the economic situation of Kosovo, we have taken note of the positive developments, especially the plans for privatizations and so on, and

we encourage the donor community to continue its contribution in order to boost Kosovo's economy.

Finally, I wish to express the appreciation of my delegation to the head of UNMIK, Special Representative of the Secretary-General Steiner, and his team for the good work which they are doing in fulfilling their mandate under resolution 1244 (1999).

The President: I thank the representative of the Mauritius for his kind words addressed to Bulgaria.

Mr. Ryan (Ireland): Ireland welcomes you, Mr. Minister, to the Security Council and congratulates Bulgaria on assuming the presidency of the Council during what will certainly be a challenging month.

We are also very grateful to Assistant Secretary-General Hedi Annabi for his, as always, full and detailed briefing.

Ireland fully supports the statement that will be delivered shortly by the representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union. Like the French and British representatives, therefore, I will restrict my comments to a few issues of particular concern to my delegation.

First, it is important to stress again our full support for work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in implementing resolution 1244 (1999). This includes the anti-crime initiative. The allegations levelled against UNMIK and KFOR following the arrest of various suspects are baseless and serve only to engender suspicion and distrust. It remains the firm and agreed aim of the Council to achieve a society in Kosovo that is based on the rule of law. The Special Representative and the Mission should continue to apply the law regardless of the ethnic, national or political affiliation of those accused. All Kosovar political leaders should support UNMIK and KFOR in the exercise of their responsibilities and should not exploit or encourage needless fears. In the meantime, we welcome the manner in which UNMIK and KFOR have calmed down the situation and the more helpful statements made recently by Kosovo Albanian leaders.

Secondly, the building of democratic institutions is vital to the transition to a fully functioning, multi-ethnic society, nowhere more so than in Kosovo. We welcome the progress already achieved with the provisional institutions in establishing concrete actions designed to meet the benchmarks set out by the Special

Representative. It is important that the Assembly should remain fully engaged in order to achieve the objective of local ownership of the process.

Thirdly, Kosovo's minorities must not only be accepted; they must be fully integrated. Serbs and other minorities returning to Kosovo must do so in the knowledge that they will live there in normal, secure conditions and that their concerns and views will be taken into account. Kosovo must be for all its people. Ireland is therefore encouraged by the improved security situation for minorities, by their increased representation in the police and judiciary and, more recently, by the range of political entities that have been certified and the number of voters registered for the municipal elections.

All organizations, including organizations outside of Kosovo concerned with internally displaced persons, should act constructively and try to facilitate as many individual returns as possible. There is a continued need for all political leaders to develop a substantive dialogue between and within the various communities. This is particularly important in order to enable them to represent their constituencies effectively and to prepare for the municipal elections.

Progress on this issue is of course linked to the development of dialogue with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. We welcome the improved nature of the meetings of the high-ranking Working Group and the fact that voter registration for the municipal elections bore witness to a positive relationship with the Belgrade authorities. Such cooperation in this and many other areas is indeed welcome. It is now also essential that the parallel structures be dismantled rapidly, particularly the parallel security structures in Mitrovica.

Fourthly, Ireland strongly supports Special Representative Steiner's efforts to focus the Assembly's attention on the wide range of issues for which it is responsible, including health and education. We have all seen recent reports about the lack of mental health facilities in Kosovo. I am sure that all of us agree that more attention must be paid to this important issue and that necessary resources must be provided. This, we believe, is not a choice; it is a duty.

Fifthly, it is clear that economic progress will be a vital component in encouraging lasting returns to Kosovo, as well as creating the conditions for real investor confidence and, ultimately, a stable society.

The close cooperation between UNMIK and the provisional institutions of self-government will be especially important in achieving economic stability and growth.

Finally, we continue to believe that Kosovo's vocation lies in Europe. Its leaders must work to build a truly multi-ethnic, democratic society in order to ensure Kosovo's progress towards European integration. Ireland, together with its partners in the European Union, will continue to support such integration and regional cooperation through the Stability Pact and the Stabilization and Association Process, as well as in our bilateral engagements with the region.

The President: I thank the representative of Ireland for his very kind words addressed to my country.

Mr. Diallo (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): We should like to wish you welcome, Mr. Minister, and to assure you of our cooperation during your country's presidency. I should also like to thank Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, for the valuable information that he has just given us.

The regular consideration of the question of Kosovo stems from the Council's interest in ensuring the effective implementation of resolution 1244 (1999). My delegation welcomes the substantial progress made since the beginning of this year in certain areas, which deserves to be pointed out.

On the political level, that progress includes the establishment of democratic institutions, the effective formation of a multi-ethnic Government, the principle of tolerance among Albanians, and the improvement of relations between Kosovo, on the one hand, and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, on the other.

In the security area, achievements include the increasingly multi-ethnic composition of the Kosovo Protection Force and the programme to collect weapons and munitions held illegally by Kosovars.

On the judicial level, there is cooperation between the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the provisional authorities of the province, the transfer of Albanian detainees from Serbia to Kosovo, and consideration by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

(UNMIK) department of justice of the legal cases concerning the majority of the remaining detainees.

With regard to the humanitarian situation, achievements include the gradual settlement of the question of missing, detained and repatriated persons and the appointment of an UNMIK official responsible for the issues of repatriation and reintegration of ethnic minorities.

My delegation is encouraged by the information just provided by Mr. Annabi regarding UNMIK's initiatives to enforce the rule of law, to prepare for the municipal elections in October and to create the necessary conditions for the return and reintegration of minorities. Those initiatives must be robustly supported. Mr. Steiner's tireless efforts to consolidate them deserve to be particularly commended. We condemn the defamatory and inciting statements of certain Kosovar authorities following the arrests by UNMIK last August in its efforts to enforce the law.

In conclusion, my delegation believes that it is now up to all the actors engaged in the process of implementing resolution 1244 (1999) to redouble their efforts in order to resolve the remaining problems and to finish the job.

The President: I thank the representative of Guinea for his kind offer of cooperation.

I shall now make a statement in my national capacity.

As a future member of the European Union, Bulgaria aligns itself with the statement that will be made shortly by the Permanent Representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union. I would like to make some additional comments of particular importance to my country.

Presiding over the Security Council in its open meeting on Kosovo is of significant importance to Bulgaria. The situation in the province continues to have a great impact on the whole region of South-Eastern Europe. Like other delegations, we are convinced that a visit by the Council to Kosovo and the region would be useful with regard to political developments.

On the eve of the municipal elections in Kosovo, Bulgaria is confident that the process of democratic institution-building, the establishment of the rule of law, the strengthening of overall security, economic

recovery and respect for human rights are gradually becoming an integral part of everyday life in the province. My country strongly endorses the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Michael Steiner, and of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to normalize life in Kosovo.

The United Nations plays a central role in the province, clearly defined in Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). We consider the presence of UNMIK and KFOR in Kosovo to be a key factor, providing a favourable environment for its democratic transition and transformation.

The progress achieved in building multi-ethnic provisional institutions of self-government in Kosovo under the constitutional framework is remarkable. At the same time, we deem the attempts of extremists to contest or undermine the supremacy of the United Nations jurisdiction in the province totally irresponsible and unacceptable.

Bulgaria would like to reaffirm its strong support for Mr. Steiner's sustained efforts to establish the rule of law in Kosovo through UNMIK's policy of zero tolerance of crime and violence. Bulgaria continues to stress the need to finally complete the investigation of the cruel assassination in 1999 of the Bulgarian citizen and United Nations official Mr. Valentin Kroumov and to punish the perpetrators.

Bulgaria commends the determination of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and of UNMIK to bring to justice those responsible for acts of violence, regardless of their ethnicity. Neither the rule of law nor reconciliation among Kosovars of all communities can be established without allowing the law enforcement authorities to do their work. We deplore the recent acts of violence against UNMIK police and KFOR and consider them an irresponsible challenge to United Nations authority in the province.

My country believes and fervently hopes that Kosovo's future will be a multi-ethnic one. No other solution should be tolerated by the international community. Therefore, we urge Kosovo's institutions of self-government, UNMIK and the Belgrade authorities to work together in a cooperative way and to find a lasting solution to the refugees' problems.

Throughout the past decade of violence at its western borders, Bulgaria has played a significant role

in the stabilization of the region. We will remain committed to that role in the future. Bulgaria is participating with a substantial number of officers, nearly 100 persons, in Kosovo's civilian police force, and one platoon under KFOR command. My country is providing additional personnel for the forthcoming municipal elections in October under the monitoring mechanism of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. We shall continue to provide the necessary support for peacekeeping operations in the Western Balkans region.

However, the rule of law and democratic governance cannot operate in an economic vacuum. Here I agree with what was said earlier by the British delegation. Economic stability guaranteed by substantial infrastructural investment — let me call it "infrastructural revolution" — in the region is needed as a precondition for sustainable development and prosperity. The improvement of general living conditions for all Kosovars — regardless of their ethnic origin — is evident, but the process of healing the wounds of the past needs more time. Therefore, the international community must take a realistic and constructive approach to the time frame for the post-conflict rehabilitation and development of Kosovo. Bulgaria is adamant that Kosovo's future lies in a united Europe created by the process of European integration.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

Mr. Šahović (Yugoslavia): I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on Bulgaria's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. Seeing you preside over this meeting, Mr. Foreign Minister, provides telling evidence of the attention with which Bulgaria, Yugoslavia's neighbour, addresses a question of paramount importance to our region. I also wish to thank Mr. Annabi for his comprehensive and interesting briefing.

After many difficult years of effort to put an end to the conflicts in the Balkans, stability still continues to elude some areas of South-East Europe. No doubt, Kosovo and Metohija will be central in determining whether the process of stabilization will take root and proceed towards accelerated integration into Europe or be stalled in a quagmire of prolonged instability. The

events that have taken place in the past several weeks are a clear demonstration of the volatility of the situation in the province.

Indeed, it is with concern that we must note that the security situation in the province remains grave. We find it necessary to draw the Council's attention to the recent joint report by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and particularly to its statement that despite gradual improvements in security, the occasional recurrence of extremely violent attacks reinforces the pervasiveness of fear among minorities.

We recognize and support the efforts of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to deal with the problem and to proceed more energetically to establish the rule of law. In that context, Yugoslavia believes that it is very important to maintain an approach that would ensure that justice is dispensed fairly and unselectively, and not as a function of day-to-day politics. A decisive approach to violence against minorities, including beginning the prosecution of crimes perpetrated against members of minority groups, is of equal significance for building a just society in Kosovo and Metohija, which is our common goal.

Border control is another significant aspect of general security. During the month of August, KFOR detained several individuals who had attempted to illegally cross the borders with Macedonia and Albania. Those incidents, as well as some others, demonstrate that far more robust efforts are needed to secure the borders. This is of particular importance if we want to prevent the export of violence from Kosovo and Metohija and the destabilization of other countries in the region.

It is necessary to state yet again that improved security also constitutes the essential precondition for the return of internally displaced persons. Only a few days ago, the ombudsman for Kosovo and Metohija said that the recent attack on Serbs in Gorazdevac would adversely affect returns. We fully share that view. Various figures have been cited for the number of people who have returned but, in addition to numbers, the core issue — to paraphrase Special Representative Michael Steiner — is whether return is in fact a genuine option at all.

Among other things, genuine return means returns to all parts of Kosovo and Metohija, including urban areas. At present, Kosovska Mitrovica, divided as it is and often perceived only as a problem, nevertheless remains the only multi-ethnic urban settlement. Responsible efforts to alleviate tensions in that city need to be based on patience and caution. Furthermore, the arrangements for the administration of the city must open up prospects for coexistence among all of the city's communities. Of course, we believe that the option to return and stay has to be realistic and viable not only in Kosovska Mitrovica but also throughout the province. In that regard, progress in addressing the question of missing persons is indispensable. Three years after the arrival of the international presences, thousands of people remain unaccounted for. We therefore call on UNMIK to address this issue in a forceful and effective way.

The protection and restoration of cultural heritage is also of great importance, all the more so as the scale of the destruction of historically and culturally unique monuments in the province is enormous and unacceptable. This also remains an obstacle to post-conflict healing. My Government expects UNMIK to address this issue in full accordance with the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict. For its part, Yugoslavia is ready to shoulder its share of responsibility.

New elections in Kosovo and Metohija are scheduled for the end of next month. My Government has repeatedly stressed the importance of Serbs in Kosovo and Metohija participating in those elections, and has called on them to do so. However, there is no doubt that their turnout will be affected by the pace and effectiveness with which their problems are addressed and resolved. They also need to start believing that there are tangible benefits to be derived from participating in local Government.

It is quite obvious that stability and European standards of tolerance and normalcy are still very far from reality in Kosovo and Metohija. To attain them the province must address itself to fulfilling at least the minimum requirements set by the benchmarks established by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, a process that has yet to begin. That is primarily the responsibility of the provisional institutions of self-government. At the same time, UNMIK must continue to exercise its reserved powers.

Much still remains to be done in every field before discussions begin on the final status of the province. We place great value on the fact that this view prevails in the Security Council. Therefore, any speculation about deadlines for the international presence could harm the efforts to address the question of Kosovo and Metohija in its entirety. The only way to move forward is to focus on the implementation of the mandates of the international presences as provided for by Security Council resolution 1244 (1999), as well as on strict compliance with the Constitutional Framework and the UNMIK/Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Common Document.

The President: I thank the representative of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for his kind and neighbourly words addressed to my country and to myself.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Ukraine. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine): On behalf of the Ukrainian delegation, I would like to welcome you, Sir, and to thank you for holding this extremely important meeting, which opens the month of the Bulgarian presidency of the Security Council. I would also like to avail myself of this opportunity to wish the whole Bulgarian team every success in fulfilling its highly responsible duties. Our thanks also go to Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his comprehensive update of the situation in Kosovo.

Ukraine reiterates its support for the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and for the efforts of Special Representative Michael Steiner, who at this stage is helping Kosovo, as he has put it, to look at the road, not at the horizon. In fact, today the Kosovo horizon is not visible even to wizards or clairvoyants. Instead of seeing the horizon, the region faces a curtain of problems.

It is of vital importance that UNMIK continue to take robust measures aimed at strengthening the rule of law in the province. Regrettably, the recent criminal charges and the arrests of several former members of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) on suspicion of committing serious crimes prompted a number of protests and accusations on the part of Kosovo leaders who were claiming that those efforts were politically motivated. In that regard, my delegation endorses the statement by the presidency of the European Union of

20 August 2002, which recognized that UNMIK actions were taken in accordance with established judicial processes and irrespective of any ethnic or political affiliation of the suspects. We believe that thorough criminal investigations against the alleged perpetrators of the crimes, together with efforts to contain organized crime networks, should reinforce the understanding that nobody can be above the law.

Another critical issue for Kosovo is the preparations for municipal elections to be held in October 2002. We note that, despite the divisions in opinion regarding the recent arrests, all of Kosovo's political leaders have called for the elections to be all-inclusive and to take place in a peaceful and calm manner. Such an approach testifies to the visible, positive changes in the province and Ukraine encourages all the communities to participate in the balloting, thus ensuring and protecting their rights.

It is a welcome sign that UNMIK's continuing efforts, in close cooperation with Belgrade, have resulted in the increase of returnees. However, it seems to be quite an ironic situation that, at this particular moment, UNMIK and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees are encountering a substantial lack of funding. In this regard, we add our voice to those of other delegations that have called upon donors to provide the international presence in Kosovo with the necessary financial resources and to encourage all the actors involved to promote this important work. In our view, the returns-related efforts should be strengthened by a coordinated policy aimed at facilitating inter-ethnic dialogue in the province.

My delegation fully endorses the recommendations made by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe mission in Kosovo. Through training, education and media campaigns, it should be ensured that measures aimed at reconciliation and inter-ethnic dialogue are central, and not marginal features in Kosovo. We believe that this is the only possible way to guide Kosovo's citizens in building a multi-ethnic and democratic society.

Establishing the rule of law, a safe and secure environment, economic development and inter-ethnic dialogue — all these critical tasks remain on the Kosovo agenda and require immediate action by its leaders, close cooperation with Belgrade and consistent international support. Ukraine is ready to continue its active participation in the stabilization processes in

Kosovo and expresses its firm commitment to the ongoing international efforts to bring peace and stability to the region.

The President: I thank the representative of Ukraine for his kind words addressed to Bulgaria and the Bulgarian team here in the United Nations.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kerim (Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): First of all, I would like to thank you very much, Sir, for giving me the opportunity to address the Security Council at this meeting. At the same time, I would like to join previous speakers who have expressed their appreciation for your personally presiding over this meeting, which represents a confirmation of Bulgaria's active approach and the importance that it attaches to the region.

I would also like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his very informative briefing on the situation and current activities of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and KFOR in Kosovo. From what we have heard today, UNMIK and KFOR are clearly achieving important results in spite of the significant problems that they are facing daily and will be facing in the future.

The Government of the Republic of Macedonia gives its full support for the efforts and activities undertaken by UNMIK and KFOR in Kosovo aimed at the further improvement of the overall situation by working together with Kosovo's provisional institutions of self-government, ensuring the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999) and building a democratic society with respect for all human rights and freedoms. We would also like to express our appreciation for the work done by Special Representative Steiner and our support for the implementation of his policy of benchmarks, which is in full accordance with what the representative of the United Kingdom today called a "standards before status" approach.

The Republic of Macedonia is fully committed to cooperation with UNMIK and KFOR in ensuring the implementation of these objectives. The Government of my country, in a session two days ago, assessed and endorsed the agreement on cooperation between

UNMIK police and the Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Macedonia. The conclusion of this agreement will have enormous significance for the promotion and development of cooperation between UNMIK police and the Macedonian Ministry of the Interior in combating organized crime, terrorism, illegal trafficking in arms, drugs and people, and money laundering.

On the border issue, the Macedonian Government has worked closely with UNMIK in order to undertake concrete steps that will facilitate the movements of farmers in the border area and the cultivation of their lands. This is in full accordance with the agreement reached between the President of the Republic of Macedonia, Boris Trajkovski, and Special Representative Steiner aimed at finding practical solutions to these problems. As a result, we have agreed to open new border crossings — as mentioned in the statement of Assistant Secretary-General Annabi today — and established a temporary procedure to be applied pending the finalization of the ongoing process of demarcation and delineation of the border between the Republic of Macedonia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

We welcome the prompt and decisive action of Mr. Steiner with regard to the recent arrests of former members of the Kosovo Liberation Army by United Nations police in Kosovo. The political authorities of the Republic of Macedonia give full support to UNMIK and KFOR in their endeavours to put an end to the activities of the people and organizations in Kosovo that use violence in pursuit of their political goals, regardless of their ethnic, national or political affiliation, especially because their extremist agenda is not limited to Kosovo alone. In this respect, we call upon all the neighbouring countries to take a clear and consistent position on this issue.

To our great disappointment, Kosovo's provisional institutions of self-government issue statements opposed to the intentions of UNMIK and KFOR to uphold the rule of law in Kosovo. These public statements only divert the local Kosovo authorities from their true goals and do not contribute to the overall stabilization of Kosovo, the achievement of the benchmarks or the spirit of regional cooperation that should bring us, all together, closer to European integration.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm the valuable contribution of the Security Council in upholding the security of my country in the process of overcoming the crisis that the Republic of Macedonia has faced in the course of the past year. In this regard, acknowledging the United Nations continuous policy of decisive and consistent action to prevent instability and conflicts in the region and to ensure peace and security in South-Eastern Europe, I would like to make use of this opportunity to refer once again to Security Council resolutions 1345 (2001) and 1371 (2001), as well as to its presidential statements of 12 and 16 March 2001 and 13 August 2001, which substantially contributed to this end.

Before I conclude my statement, I would like, Sir, to wish you success in the Bulgarian presidency of the Security Council in the month of September.

The President: I thank the representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for the kind words of a neighbour addressed to Bulgaria.

I now give the floor to the representative of Denmark. I invite her to take a place at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Løj (Denmark): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area, Iceland and Liechtenstein, align themselves with this statement.

Let me begin by congratulating you, Mr. Minister, as others who have spoken before me have done, on Bulgaria's assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of September.

I would like to thank Assistant Secretary-General Annabi for his informative briefing on the latest developments in Kosovo since the meeting of the Council on 30 July. Allow me also at the outset to welcome the recent appointment of Mr. Francesco Bastagli as the deputy head of the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo (UNMIK) in charge of civil administration.

The European Union is satisfied that Kosovo continues to move in the right direction towards the

full implementation of resolution 1244 (1999). We welcome the continuing progress in the preparations for the municipal elections on 26 October, and we are encouraged by the latest figures on the number of political entities from all communities that have been certified. The creation of a multi-ethnic coalition following the recent municipal elections in southern Serbia should serve as inspiration for the parties in Kosovo.

At the same time, however, we are seriously concerned by recent events that have increased political tensions in Kosovo. In particular, the European Union deeply regrets that the demonstrations protesting the arrest of former members of the Kosovo Liberation Army and others led to violent clashes between demonstrators and UNMIK police and KFOR and resulted in large numbers of injured. We also deplore the statement of the Kosovo Government which imputed a political motivation into efforts to uphold the rule of law in Kosovo.

The European Union fully supports UNMIK's efforts to maintain order and uphold the rule of law in Kosovo. The authority of UNMIK in this respect is clearly established by the Security Council in resolution 1244 (1999). The European Union is confident that recent arrests have taken place in accordance with the established judicial process and have been carried out regardless of the ethnic, national or political affiliation of the suspects.

The European Union calls upon all politicians in Kosovo to contribute to a society that respects the rule of law and in which the judiciary performs its functions without political interference. This is a basic requirement for progress in Kosovo, as well as for closer relations with the European Union.

The European Union expresses its strong concern regarding recent events in the area of Pec, where UNMIK police and KFOR came under fire from several attackers while protecting Kosovo Serb farmers. In particular, the European Union deplores that these events took place in an area that is of great importance for the implementation of the return programme in Kosovo.

The European Union notes the recent progress achieved in the return process with the assistance of UNMIK and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and we reaffirm the importance of continuing to work towards a more favourable climate for the acceptance of returnees. We encourage further collaboration between UNMIK and the Kosovo provisional institutions to establish the necessary conditions for the acceleration of the return process. At the same time, it is important that the returns take place in an orderly fashion to ensure the sustainability of this process.

I shall conclude by underlining that the European Union remains fully committed to supporting the peaceful long-term development of Kosovo. We encourage all parties to continue to work together in a responsible manner towards achieving this common objective.

The President: I shall now invite Mr. Annabi to respond to comments, if he wishes.

Mr. Annabi: There were no specific questions addressed to me, but since I have the floor, let me take the opportunity to thank members of the Council for the support they have expressed to UNMIK in its efforts to ensure the implementation of its mandate in general and to uphold the rule of law in particular. I am sure that this support will be very much appreciated by our colleagues in UNMIK at a time when they are working on the preparation of the municipal elections scheduled for next month.

Let me thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this meeting.

The President: There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.



Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4606th meeting

Friday, 6 September 2002, 12.55 p.m.
New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Tafrov	(Bulgaria)
<i>Members:</i>	Cameroon	Mr. Binzi
	China	Mr. Chen Xu
	Colombia	Mr. Ocaziones
	France	Mrs. d'Achon
	Guinea	Mr. Camara
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mauritius	Mrs. Napaul
	Mexico	Ms. Lajous
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Singapore	Ms. Lim
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Harrison
	United States of America	Ms. Connelly

Agenda

The situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia

Progress report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2002/977).

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.



The meeting was called to order at 12.55 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia

Progress report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea (S/2002/977)

The President (*spoke in French*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the progress report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea, document S/2002/977. Members of the Council also have before them document S/2002/980, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bulgaria, Cameroon, China, Colombia, France, Guinea, Ireland, Mauritius, Mexico, Norway, Russian Federation, Singapore, Syrian Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President (*spoke in French*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1434 (2002).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.



Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4607th meeting

Wednesday, 11 September 2002, 12.45 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Parvanov	(Bulgaria)
Members:	Cameroon	Mr. Ngoubeyou
	China	Mr. Tang Jiaxuan
	Colombia	Mrs. Barco Isakson
	France	Mr. Galouzeau de Villepin
	Guinea	Mr. Fall
	Ireland	Mr. Cowen
	Mauritius	Mr. Gayan
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Norway	Mr. Petersen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Ivanov
	Singapore	Mr. Jayakumar
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Al-Shara
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Straw
	United States of America	Mr. Powell

Agenda

High-level meeting of the Security Council on the anniversary of 11 September 2001: acts of international terrorism

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.



The meeting was called to order at 12.50 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

High-level meeting of the Security Council on the anniversary of 11 September 2001: acts of international terrorism

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

The purpose of this meeting is to pay solemn tribute to the memory of the victims of the terrorist acts that struck the United States on this very day one year ago.

On behalf of the members of the Security Council, I wish to thank all the Ministers and representatives present in this Chamber in expressing the international community's solidarity with the people and the Government of the United States of America.

I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General and invite him to take the floor.

The Secretary-General: I am happy that you are here, Mr. President, and that so many Foreign Ministers are also here in this Chamber to mark this solemn occasion with us.

September eleventh is one of those cataclysmic events — like the assassination of John F. Kennedy — that will stay forever fresh and vivid in our memory. No matter how long each of us lives, we will remember where we were and what we were doing when we heard the news. Recalling that terrible, dark day, I wish to start by expressing my profound sympathy with the people of the United States, who suffered so grievously as a result of that terrible atrocity.

I express my deepest condolences to the families of the thousands of men and women from more than 90 countries who were murdered that day and whose own lives have changed utterly. Together, they represented a United Nations of world citizens, coming together in one city to seek a better future for themselves and for their families. Their deaths diminish all mankind, and

all mankind must come together to restore the sanctity of the values we hold dear — tolerance, pluralism, peace and respect for every human life.

The United Nations was founded to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, and today the nations are united to defend humanity from a new kind of warfare. We are all called upon to defeat an enemy that makes no distinction between the weak and the strong, the high or the low — an enemy who sees as a target the entire edifice of international cooperation to which the United Nations is dedicated.

No body has a more central role to play in meeting this challenge than the Security Council. Over the last year, it has fulfilled this role with patience, creativity and determination, showing by its actions how essential it is to defeat terrorism by building the broadest possible international coalition.

On the very day after the attacks, the General Assembly and the Security Council adopted strong resolutions condemning them and calling on all States to cooperate in bringing the perpetrators to justice. Subsequently, the Security Council adopted unanimously a far-reaching resolution aimed at targeting terrorists and those who harbour, aid or support them. Under that resolution, Member States are cooperating in a wide range of areas — from suppressing the financing of terrorism to providing early warning, cooperating in criminal investigations and exchanging information.

The past year has also given us hope that terrorism can be defeated if the international community summons the will to unite in a broad coalition. As the work of the Council has shown, the United Nations remains uniquely positioned to serve as the forum for that coalition, and for the development of those steps that Governments must now take — separately and together — to combat terrorism on a global scale.

The legitimacy that the United Nations conveys can ensure that the greatest number of States are able and willing to take the necessary and difficult steps — diplomatic, legal and political — that are needed to defeat terrorism. Today, one year after the attacks, the importance of global legitimacy in the fight against terrorism has only grown. I call on the Council to strive even harder to ensure that the struggle ahead wins the widest possible support.

All humanity has a stake in this fight. The United Nations must ensure that it is fought in unison and won in a legitimate way.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his important statement.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Colin Powell, Secretary of State of the United States of America.

Mr. Powell (United States of America): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting of the Security Council.

We gather on this solemn anniversary as representatives of our own countries, and also as representatives of the international community. Together we honour the dead of 90 nations who were murdered on this day one year ago: men and women of every continent, culture and creed; of every region, race and religion. The full cycle of seasons has come and gone for the loved ones of the victims. Their grief is still fresh. For them, the past 12 months have been a chronicle of absences, a calendar filled with daily reminders of loss — missing faces, missing voices, missing embraces — absences as poignant and palpable as the twin towers missing from the New York skyline. On this day of remembrance, we extend to the family members all over the world our deepest condolences for their sorrow.

Here in the United States, 11 September is seared deeply into our national consciousness. The attacks on our soil drew us closer as a people. They also drew us closer to people of kindness and good will across the globe. We will never forget the outpouring of sympathy and solidarity we received from throughout the international community. On behalf of President Bush and on behalf of the American people, I wish to express my country's abiding gratitude to all those who reached out to us at our time of national trial.

Amidst the fire and smoke, amidst the confusion and shock, some things became very clear to us in the United States, and to the entire international community. It was clear that the terrorists did not just strike America. They attacked the values of the civilized world that are enshrined in the United Nations Charter. It was clear that terrorism is a threat to international peace and security; and it was clear that all the world's nations had to take concerted action if this menace was to be eradicated once and for all.

And so, in defence of shared values and out of a sense of shared vulnerability, the world answered President Bush's call for a great global coalition against terrorism. The Security Council, the General Assembly and every single regional and subregional organization represented at this world body condemned the attacks. Members of the United Nations made binding commitments to combat terrorism, and in the past 12 months much has been accomplished. Together we have taken decisive steps to weaken terrorism's deadly grip on various parts of the globe, not least on Afghanistan.

Coalition forces, led by the United States, have liberated the Afghan people from the dual tyranny of Al Qaeda terrorists and the Taliban. With the assistance of the international community, Afghanistan now has an interim governing authority, an agreed path to a representative Government. The world community is working with Afghanistan's new leadership to meet the humanitarian needs of the Afghan people, including the needs of millions of returning refugees and internally displaced persons. With the contribution of donor nations across the globe, the international community is helping the Afghan people begin the enormous task of recovery and reconstruction. For the first time in over two decades, the men and women of Afghanistan look to the future with hope.

Elsewhere in the world the international community is making it harder by the day for terrorists to support their operations, acquire weapons of mass destruction, move about freely, find sanctuary, communicate and plot. Thanks to our combined efforts, every day somewhere in the world terrorists are being arrested, their cells are being broken up, their financial bloodlines are being severed, their plans are being disrupted and their attacks are being foiled. Indeed, the actions we have taken to date against terrorism have shown the power of our collective will.

But from the beginning all of us recognized that our fight has to be more than a response to the particular events of 11 September. It is about eliminating terrorism as a global menace. We must be prepared for a long, hard effort measured in years, not in months. For our part, the people of the United States understand that, long after the void in New York City's skyline has been filled by a fitting monument, long after it is possible to tell where the rebuilt walls of the Pentagon meet the old, long after nature has mended the gash in that Pennsylvania field, our country must

still remain vigilant and resolute, not just for our own sake but for the well-being of people everywhere.

Terrorism is antithetical to the better world for which we have worked since the United Nations was founded. We are all in this together. So, on behalf of President Bush and the American people, I solemnly recommit the United States to our common fight against terrorism. We join all other Members of the United Nations in the effort to build a world of peace, prosperity and freedom where terrorism cannot thrive.

The President: I thank the Secretary of State of the United States of America for his important statement.

After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council meets today in remembrance and resolve. One year ago, infamous and horrifying acts of terrorism took almost 3,000 innocent lives. They included nationals of half the countries of the world. These attacks changed the way we see our world. Today, the Council honours those innocents killed and injured in the attacks of 11 September 2001. The Council expresses solidarity with their families.

"New York is the home of the United Nations. The Security Council admires this city's determination to forge ahead, to rebuild, not to give in to terrorism. The deaths and destruction of 11 September strengthen our common bonds and aspirations. The Council affirms that these attacks were an assault on global civilization and our common efforts to make the world a better and safer place. The world saw terrorists use civilian aircraft for mass murder. They struck at the ideals embodied in the Charter of the United Nations. The attacks challenged each Member to rise to the task of defeating terrorism, which has claimed victims in all corners of the world.

"Following 11 September 2001, both the General Assembly and the Security Council reacted in outrage and condemnation. They demanded that those responsible for these crimes be brought to justice. The Council described such acts, like any acts of international terrorism, as threats to international peace and security.

"The international community has responded to the atrocities of 11 September 2001 with unyielding determination. A broad coalition

of states has taken action against the Taliban, Al-Qaida and their supporters. It did so in defence of common values and common security. Consistent with the high purposes of this institution and the provisions of the United Nations Charter the coalition continues to pursue those responsible.

"The international community as a whole provides vital support as Afghans rebuild their country. The Council applauds the efforts of so many from every continent and corner of the world. And today, the Council also honours those who died in this common effort.

"The Security Council gave substance to its determination to combat international terrorism with its historic resolution 1373 (2001). In it, we made the fight against terrorism a mandatory obligation of the international community, consistent with the United Nations Charter and international law. The Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee promotes cooperation and works to achieve the effective implementation of resolution 1373 (2001). The Council has also established and oversees the worldwide sanctions regime against Al-Qaida and the Taliban.

"The Security Council calls on all States and regional and subregional organizations to carry forward and build on their cooperation with the Counter-Terrorism Committee and the Committee established by resolution 1267 (1999) of the Security Council.

"The threat is real, the challenge is enormous, and the fight against terrorism will be long. The Security Council will remain steadfast against the threat that endangers all that has been achieved, and all that remains to be achieved, to fulfil the principles and purposes of the United Nations for all people everywhere.

"Now let us remember and reflect with a minute of silence."

The Council observed a minute of silence.

The President: This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2002/25.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.



Security Council

Distr.: General
13 September 2002

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 4608th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

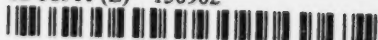
**Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Friday,
13 September 2002, at 12.15 p.m.**

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"At its 4608th meeting, held in private on 13 September 2002, the Security Council considered the item entitled "The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo".

"Their Excellencies Mr. Joseph Kabila, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Rwandese Republic, and Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of South Africa, were invited to participate in the discussion in accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

"The Secretary-General, the members of the Council, the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the President of the Rwandese Republic, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of South Africa had a constructive discussion."





Security Council

Distr.: General
17 September 2002

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 4609th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

**Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday,
17 September 2002, at 11.30 a.m.**

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

“At its 4609th meeting, held in private on 17 September 2002, the Security Council considered the item entitled ‘The situation in Burundi’.

“The President, with the consent of the Council, invited His Excellency Mr. Tèrence Sinunguruza, Minister for External Relations and Cooperation of Burundi to participate in the discussion in accordance with rule 37 of the Council’s provisional rules of procedure.

“The Minister for External Relations and Cooperation of Burundi and the members of the Council had a constructive discussion.”





Security Council

Distr.: General
18 September 2002

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 4610th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 18 September 2002, at 3.30 p.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 18 September 2002, the Security Council, pursuant to resolution 1353 (2001), annex II, sections A and B, held its 4610th meeting in private with the troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL).

"The Security Council and the troop-contributing countries heard a briefing under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure by Mr. Oluyemi Adeniji, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone and Head of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone.

"The members of the Council had a constructive exchange of views with representatives of participating troop-contributing countries."





Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4611th meeting

Thursday, 19 September 2002, 10.30 a.m.
New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Tafrov	(Bulgaria)
<i>Members:</i>	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Singapore	Ms. Foo
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Williamson

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.



The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Afghanistan

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Afghanistan, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Farhâdi (Afghanistan) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Brahimi to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in the course of its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan.

I now give the floor to Mr. Brahimi.

Mr. Brahimi: I am honoured to have been asked to come once again before the Council to brief members on the situation in Afghanistan. It is also an honour for me, Sir, to speak under your presidency.

The General Assembly and the gathering of senior ministers from more than 20 nations last Friday in support of Afghanistan offered a timely opportunity for the international community to renew its commitment to Afghanistan and to reflect on what has been achieved and, more important, on what still must be done. Careful stock-taking is required as the Transitional Authority initiates its two-year mandate and begins to grapple with the challenges of consolidating peace in Afghanistan.

The assassination attempt on President Karzai on 5 September and the car bombing in Kabul the same day once again illustrate the difficult security environment that the Transitional Administration is facing. It is also a fact that the people of Afghanistan expect real improvement in their daily lives. The prestige and legitimacy of the Transitional Administration will depend, therefore, on its ability to address effectively the most pressing security and recovery needs. Should it fail, fragmentation will become more entrenched, extremism will rise, and then foreign countries, groups and individuals may be drawn once again into the fray and the resumption of widespread violence will most likely ensue.

Nevertheless, Afghanistan has come a long way. It would have been inconceivable just a year ago to imagine an Afghan President, elected by secret ballot, standing before the General Assembly and outlining a vision of an Afghan State determined to modernize itself, building on the rich heritage of Islamic civilization to promote justice, the rule of law, human rights and freedom — an Afghanistan determined to promote tolerance and achieve prosperity. These are noble and worthwhile objectives, but President Karzai knows better than anyone else — and he said so himself last week on every occasion — that Afghanistan will not achieve these goals without committed, sustained and generous support from the international community.

Facing the twin challenges of security and recovery is not something that the Transitional Administration can achieve alone. It simply does not have the resources. Major infrastructure projects — in transport and roads, energy and telecommunications, mines and industry, water and agriculture — that can bring jobs, improve economic and trade prospects and facilitate foreign investment require a very significant financial and technical input from outside Afghanistan.

Last week's announcement of a \$180-million aid package from the United States of America, Japan and Saudi Arabia for road construction is an extremely positive development. We are also heartened by the European Union's pledge to rehabilitate the Kabul to Jalalabad road.

But we must remember that, today, the Transitional Administration in Afghanistan lacks the very modest budget required to meet its basic recurrent costs. I hope that the donors have heard President Karzai's urgent appeal and I hope that we all remember the comments made in Tokyo by the Secretary-General to the effect that today's millions are worth tomorrow's billions.

It is also important to note, again with President Karzai, that most international funding is still going to humanitarian assistance, which is necessary but not quite sufficient to bring back peace and stability to the country. Without massive job creation, the country cannot handle some of the most immediate peace-building tasks. Hundreds of thousands of jobs have to be created to enable impoverished Afghans to earn a living and climb out of debt, and to accommodate the flow of returning refugees, mainly from Pakistan and Iran. Hundreds of thousands more jobs need to be created for comprehensive disarmament and reintegration to be achieved or for viable alternatives to poppy cultivation to be offered. In a stable and safe society, employment-generation on this scale would be expected to result largely from private investment. In the context of Afghanistan today, there is no immediate alternative to international public investment. This may seem an ambitious undertaking. It is, however, the price that, I hope, the international community will help Afghanistan pay for peace and stability.

One way of achieving this is through a concerted strategy that links assistance priorities to the requirements of political reconstruction and stability. It is necessary to accelerate the implementation of nationwide programmes, such as the World Bank-supported National Solidarity Programme, which aims to inject income into communities through large labour-intensive and cash-for-work schemes. The focus of these projects will be on essential economic and social infrastructure, such as the rehabilitation of feeder roads, local water works, schools and health centres.

The Transitional Administration needs urgent financial assistance at the moment for its ambitious project of introducing a new currency. Much work has been done already and, if all goes well, the operation will begin early next month. The United Nations believes that the initiative will have a very positive impact on promoting national unity, economic stability and social cohesion. As part of this process, the Government of Afghanistan will also address the revitalization of the financial and banking systems throughout the country. The United Nations is supporting this process by assisting in the procurement, logistics, planning and monitoring of the operation. I urge the international community to respond positively to the Afghan Administration's request for donor support for this very important nationwide exercise.

The Transitional Administration is taking a leadership role in planning for the future and the United Nations is committed to supporting the Government in the development of the national development framework and the national budget in the coming month. Ministers have been encouraged to establish their own vision and priorities. The Minister of Education, for example, has already set the priorities for education for the next 18 months, reinforcing a very simple message: a roof for every school, a textbook for every child, and tables and chairs for every classroom.

One aim of the United Nations is to support and help develop the capacity of the Government. The Afghan cabinet and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) are working together to accelerate the development of the Government, to decentralize assistance and develop sub-national programmes tailored to the needs of individual provinces, and to develop a more integrated and cost-effective United Nations response.

Progress has already been made and the United Nations is helping national authorities to assume an increasingly central role in the coordination of assistance. An increasing number of United Nations personnel are being located in Government offices to support the Transitional Administration in the development of its policies and activities. The United Nations is supporting Government institutions to develop national information, vulnerability analysis and nutrition surveillance systems and to track donor support and aid flows. These are functions that the United Nations itself was performing alone less than 12 months ago. In the coming months, this support should

be further developed with an overall capacity-building plan that focuses on civil service reform and the increasing decentralization of integrated United Nations assistance at the provincial level.

The communiqué which was issued by senior ministers last week after the high-level ad hoc meeting on Afghanistan signalled the international community's recognition of the most serious challenge facing Afghanistan today — security. President Karzai and the Secretary-General, along with almost everyone in Afghanistan, have repeatedly called for the expansion of the International Security Assistance Force. This has not been possible. As a result, people in Afghanistan, as well as in neighbouring countries, are disappointed and concerned. But there is now a growing realization that the efforts of the Afghans in the field of security need to be supported more directly and more effectively and I very much hope that focused discussions will soon take place on this issue in Kabul, with the participation of Afghan authorities, the United Nations and key members of the international community. The rationale behind the need for international cooperation in that regard is very simple: Afghanistan does not have a national army; it does not have a national police; and it will take some time to build both.

The Afghans themselves realize that they need to do much better than they have done so far in this regard and a significant part of the work of the Government, in cooperation with the United Nations and other partners, must concentrate in the weeks to come on these issues. Before the end of the year, Afghanistan should have a credible and achievable agenda to build a national army and a national police that will progressively take over from the present factional and de facto forces all over the country. This requires demobilizing many of the currently armed elements and helping them to reintegrate into civilian society. It also requires training and inducting new elements, and it requires reorganizing and reforming the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Interior, and the intelligence services.

The first two months of the Transitional Administration have seen a proliferation of local conflicts and violence. The United Nations itself has been the target of terrorist acts on three separate occasions these past two months. Two of these attacks were reported in previous briefings to the Council — that is, the grenade thrown into the compound of the

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Kandahar on 3 August, and the bomb placed against the wall of the United Nations guest house in Kabul on 25 August. The United Nations Children's Fund's compound in Jalalabad was the target of a rocket attack just two days ago. In these three incidents, a little Afghan girl was wounded in Kabul, and a security guard also suffered injury in the recent attack in Jalalabad.

Only once in the past was the United Nations the target of violence in Afghanistan, and that was when Colonel Calo, a military advisor for the United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan (UNSM), was assassinated in Kabul in 1998. The United Nations is serving the people of Afghanistan. It is feeding the hungry, providing clean water to families, attending to the sick, helping kids go to school, and helping refugees and internally displaced persons to return home. It is also working with all Afghans to rebuild what has been destroyed by 23 years of conflict. Afghans of all walks of life understand fully the importance of the United Nations for them and for their country. That is why they spontaneously come, after each incident, to express solidarity and sympathy and to condemn these acts, which they consider as being directed at the people of Afghanistan as a whole.

These incidents are of some concern, as is the continuing violence across Afghanistan. While there have been recent sporadic localized clashes in several parts of the country, the situation is now, however, calmer compared to previous weeks. Tensions had been particularly acute in the north and the south-east, but within the last few days there have been positive developments in those troubled and troublesome areas. The two main rival factions in the north, Jamiat and Jumbesh, agreed to establish a joint force to tackle violence and instability. The force would disarm all parties involved in fomenting conflict. The long awaited demilitarization of the main northern city of Mazar-e-Sharif started last week. All major commanders present in Mazar have withdrawn outside the city boundaries with their weapons and ammunition. Controls by the police and members of the Security Commission are ongoing, and have resulted in the disarmament of the remaining small detachments. The leaders of Jumbesh and Jamiat in the area, Generals Dostum and Atta, announced that in the future there would be no place for small commanders who fight for personal benefit.

In the south-east, Pacha Khan Zadran, who has been a thorn in the Government's side, declared his opposition to President Karzai and his Government's appointed local representatives, but was forced out of Khost when the local governor launched an offensive that succeeded in removing Zadran's forces from the city. Several people died, unfortunately, when the city was rocketed by Zadran's retreating troops, but fighting subsided after three days, on 10 September. The United Nations has now been able to resume its operations in the area.

In the last briefing to the Security Council on Afghanistan, the question of transitional justice was raised in relation to the publicity surrounding the site of a mass grave in Dasht-e-Leili, near Shiberghan. I think it is fairly certain that a large number of people died in — to say the least — suspicious circumstances. Nonetheless, the leaders of the major factions of the north have issued a statement jointly rejecting the allegations that Taliban prisoners suffocated in containers on their way to Shiberghan prison. They also expressed their willingness to cooperate with any investigations, provided that they were carried out by experts in an objective and impartial way. UNAMA's human rights team travelled to the north to seek further information from the signatories of the statement. The Transitional Administration and the Afghan Human Rights Commission have agreed that an investigation of several sites, including one or more where the bodies were presumed to be the victims of the Taliban, should now take place. UNAMA has been in touch with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to ask for assistance in identifying the forensic teams needed to carry out this task. Additional security will be needed from the Government, local authority and the international community to help the investigators carry out this work. A word of caution, however: it will probably — probably — be possible to do the forensic part of the investigation. Whether and when it will be possible to actually conclude the investigation is another matter. Ensuring the security of potential witnesses, as well as the security of the investigating teams, is, of course, of paramount importance, and, as things stand at the moment, by no means certain.

In the face of the many difficulties along the path to the restoration of security and prosperity in Afghanistan, I have been advocating that the international community should show neither panic nor complacency. We have been very lucky in Kabul during the first six months of 2002. None of the rocket attacks recorded between April and June caused any casualties. The people of Afghanistan showed great patience and enthusiasm throughout the Loya Jirga process, in spite of uncertainty about security and economic hardships. This may have bred a little complacency and a sense that the peace process in Afghanistan can be achieved at low cost to the international community. Let the near miss of the attempt on the life of President Karzai, the tragedy of the car bombing in Kabul on 5 September and the expressions of frustration from ordinary Afghans concerning recovery be a wake-up call for all of us, Afghans and internationals alike. The oil tanker carrying explosives that was captured near Kabul on 14 September reconfirms that there are people out there who are intent on continuing the deadly cycle of violence.

To borrow from the statement of the Secretary-General after the assassination attempt on President Karzai's life and the car bombing, we trust that these setbacks will only strengthen the resolve of the international community and the legitimate Afghan authorities to bring security and stability to Afghanistan.

We owe a debt of gratitude to the international community for its sustained interest and its support for Afghanistan, but time is of the essence. In the months following the anniversary of the 11 September attacks and in the few weeks before the anniversary of the Bonn Agreement, I hope that the international community will turn its undoubted commitment to Afghanistan into more forceful action.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Ambassador Brahimi for his very comprehensive briefing. In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of this subject.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.



Security Council

Distr.: General
19 September 2002

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 4612th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

**Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday,
19 September 2002, at 3.30 p.m.**

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

"On 19 September 2002, the Security Council, pursuant to resolution 1353 (2001), annex II, sections A and B, held its 4612th meeting in private with the troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

"The Security Council and the troop-contributing countries heard a briefing under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure by Mr. Hédi Annabi, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

"The members of the Council had a constructive exchange of views with representatives of participating troop-contributing countries."





Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4613th meeting

Friday, 20 September 2002, 11 a.m.
New York

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Tafrov	(Bulgaria)
<i>Members:</i>	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	China	Mr. Zhang Yishan
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.



The meeting was called to order at 11.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Terje Roed-Larsen, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Roed-Larsen to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in the course of its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Terje Roed-Larsen, Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General.

I now give the floor to Mr. Roed-Larsen.

Mr. Roed-Larsen: Since the last briefing to the Security Council by Mr. Türk on 22 August, the humanitarian situation in the occupied Palestinian territory has continued to deteriorate. In response to the dramatic decline in living conditions, the Secretary-General dispatched Ms. Catherine Bertini, his Personal Humanitarian Envoy, to review the situation.

Until two days ago, there had been six weeks of relative calm in Israel itself, although Israeli military operations resulted in a number of Palestinian civilian deaths during this time. This was strongly deplored by the Secretary-General in his statement of 4 September. This week, we have seen two suicide attacks inside Israel and a bomb blast in a Palestinian school. There have also been meetings of the Quartet. I will begin this briefing with the Quartet's activities.

On Tuesday, 17 September, the Quartet principals held three meetings: Quartet only, Quartet plus five

Arab ministers, and Quartet plus representatives of the two parties, represented by Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Nabil Shaath, the Palestinian Minister for Planning and International Cooperation. This was followed by a communique, which members of the Council will have seen.

The meetings focused on the humanitarian situation, security issues, institutional reform and political issues. There was a common understanding that these issues are all closely linked and that, for example, neither the security problem nor the humanitarian crisis can be fully solved without a political solution.

Members of the Quartet expressed great concern about the humanitarian situation and the finding in Ms. Bertini's report that the crisis might spiral out of control within months. Fifty per cent of the population are now dependent on food hand-outs from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) or the World Food Programme (WFP), while malnutrition and water-borne diseases are spreading.

The latest socio-economic report of the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories (UNSCO), which will be released later today, shows that unemployment is now around 50 per cent; poverty levels have reached 70 per cent in Gaza and 55 per cent in the West Bank while income losses are estimated at \$7.6 million a day, meaning a total loss of \$3.3 billion since October 2000.

On top of this, the Palestinian Authority is facing a fiscal crisis. This month, for instance, the cost of Palestinian Authority operations and supplies stands at \$90 million, while the total resources available are less than \$55 million.

Members of the Quartet underlined to the Israeli delegation the problems of access and movement within the occupied territory and, further, how closures adversely affect Palestinian security training, humanitarian delivery and the ability of the Palestinian Authority and civil society to discuss and implement reform, including the holding of elections, which the Palestinian Authority has called for 20 January 2003. It was also pointed out that the past six weeks had seen noticeable quiet from the Palestinian side — this was, of course, before the two suicide bombs of yesterday and the day before — despite many actions undertaken against Palestinians during the same period.

On reform, members of the Quartet agreed that progress had been uneven at best, though there were promising signs, especially in the area of financial transparency. Ultimately, the credibility of reform depends on Palestinians seeing improvement in both living conditions and political prospects.

The Secretary-General told the parties that, in spite of high-level assurances of increased Israeli cooperation with humanitarian agencies, officials of these agencies are reporting only marginal improvements on the ground. The bottom line is that there can be no real progress on the humanitarian front if Israel does not alter its system of security, which, while based on entirely legitimate and understandable concerns, is hurting an increasingly significant portion of the Palestinian population.

To move forward on the humanitarian and development challenges, a United Nations mission involving key agencies working closely with the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, will be dispatched to the region to develop a detailed plan. The plan will be assessed at a United Nations-facilitated meeting involving United Nations agencies, donors and multilateral institutions, prior to a ministerial-level donors meeting in December.

The Secretary-General stressed to the Quartet, the regional actors and the parties themselves that it was important to move forward, now more than ever. Increased tension in the region produced by the Iraq issue increase still further the importance of rapid positive movement on the Israeli-Palestinian track.

As expressed in the communiqué, members of the Quartet were in agreement over a three-phase plan of action or road map for achieving a two-State solution within three years. That plan must be performance-driven, but also hope-driven. The Palestinians need to feel hope to make possible further progress, just as the Israelis need to feel secure.

Since there is such a lack of confidence between the parties, forward movement will be monitored and assessed by a third-party mechanism to be established by the Quartet. The Quartet principals instructed their envoys to work on operationalizing this mechanism and other aspects of the road map in the coming weeks.

The Quartet believes that an important step could be a declaration of statehood with provisional borders, should the Palestinians opt for this, as early as possible in 2003. This would be endorsed by the Quartet, conditional upon its assessment of the reform process.

The Quartet also intends to make it clear to the Israelis that they must take immediate steps to allow far greater freedom of movement for Palestinians and goods, withdraw from self-rule areas reoccupied since October 2000, end targeted killings and freeze settlement activity.

All this would be followed by permanent status negotiations in the third phase of the plan, from 2004 to mid-2005, and an international conference that would address all tracks of the peace process for a truly comprehensive peace. The Quartet emphasized, both to the regional actors and to the parties, that it could not move forward alone. As the Secretary-General told the parties, action by both on all subjects — humanitarian, security, reform and the political process — was essential. The world was counting on them to take mutual and parallel action.

Turning to the situation on the ground, members of the Council will be aware of a deeply unfortunate upsurge of violence in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza in recent days.

On 17 September there was a bomb blast in a Palestinian school near Hebron. Five pupils were wounded, and Israeli police suspect the involvement of Jewish extremists. This is the third incident of this nature this year. On 18 September, two Palestinians were killed and 21 wounded in a series of Israeli Defence Force (IDF) operations across the West Bank and Gaza.

In addition, a suicide bomber the previous day blew himself up in Umm el Fahm, killing an Israeli policeman. On 19 September, a Palestinian suicide bomber in Tel Aviv killed five Israelis and wounded 40. These are repugnant and tragic events which the Secretary-General has condemned unreservedly.

The past weeks also witnessed a number of IDF operations, including widespread arrests and ongoing assassinations, as well as a tightened closure regime and curfews. According to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, these curfews confine to their homes, on average, almost half a million Palestinians in more than 20 cities and towns,

sometimes for days at a time. Yesterday, troops fired into a crowd of schoolchildren protesting a curfew in the Amari refugee camp in Ramallah, killing a 9 year-old boy.

In the month leading up to 17 September 2002, 56 Palestinians were killed by Israelis, and five Israelis were killed by Palestinians. Nevertheless, the period of 4 August to 18 September was the longest without a suicide bomber since November 2000. In this time we also saw sustained introspection on the Palestinian side concerning the utility of violence.

Yesterday, the IDF once again encircled President Arafat's offices in Ramallah, once more carrying out major demolitions. The siege of his office continues today.

The issue of reform continues to be an important one, with progress to date especially in the financial area. Palestinian legislators are awaiting the appointment by President Arafat of a new cabinet, following the resignation last week of the current government under threat of a no-confidence vote. Many are also calling for the appointment of a Prime Minister. The security situation continues to undermine reform efforts. Yesterday's incursion and the renewed isolation of President Arafat's compound undoubtedly weaken the position of those working for major reform.

Turning now to the issue of southern Lebanon, a four-month period of what could be termed tense stability was shattered on 29 August 2002 when Hizbullah launched an attack against IDF positions in the Sheb'a farms area, killing a soldier and wounding two others.

More recently, tensions have been raised considerably over a looming water crisis. Lebanon is currently undertaking a water project to draw water from the Wazzani springs. The Government has stated repeatedly that it is fully entitled to draw increased amounts of water from its own sources.

Israeli concerns have centred on what it calls the unilateral manner in which Lebanon is undertaking the project and on the perceived potential impact on water

flow into Israel. The absence of accurate technical data on the nature and scope of the project has served to heighten tension. The need to obtain independent, technical information has been the focus of all concerned in trying to defuse tensions surrounding this issue.

Two United States water experts have been dispatched on a technical, fact-finding mission to the area, in consultation with the Israeli and Lebanese sides. The United Nations has urging both parties to show restraint. The Israeli Government should refrain from the threat of force. The Government of Lebanon has also been urged on several occasions by all concerned, including the United Nations, to provide promptly a detailed report on current water projects in southern Lebanon. Thus far, no documentation has been received.

To conclude, and returning to the subject of the Quartet meetings, a number of steps need to be taken by both the Israelis and the Palestinians in several areas. Improved security performance and humanitarian delivery are essential, but it will not be possible to sustain progress in either field without parallel movement in the political arena. "Security first", as the Secretary-General has said so often, is never going to work in the Middle East. Steps need to be taken, not on a sequential basis, but in parallel and with reciprocity.

The roadmap which the Quartet principals instructed their envoys to flesh out in the coming days needs to be based on performance, but it must also be founded on hope. One without the other will bring nothing but a continuation of the impasse.

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall now invite Council Members to attend informal consultations in the neighbouring chamber to continue our discussion of the subject.

The meeting rose at 11:35 a.m.



Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

4614th meeting

Monday, 23 September 2002, 10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Tafrov	(Bulgaria)
Members:	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	China	Mr. Wang Yingfan
	Colombia	Mr. Valdivieso
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Guinea	Mr. Traoré
	Ireland	Mr. Ryan
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Mexico	Mr. Aguilar Zinser
	Norway	Mr. Kolby
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Wehbe
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

Letter dated 20 September 2002 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/1055)

Note verbale dated 20 September 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/1056)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

Letter dated 20 September 2002 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/1055)

Note verbale dated 20 September 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/1056)

The President (spoke in French): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Algeria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Cuba, Denmark, Egypt, India, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Jordan, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sudan, Tunisia and Turkey, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Lancry (Israel) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Baali (Algeria), Mr. Buallay (Bahrain), Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh), Mr. Rodriguez Parrilla (Cuba), Ms. Løj (Denmark), Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt), Mr. Nambiar (India), Mr. Zarif (Islamic Republic of Iran), Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein (Jordan), Mr. Dorda (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia), Mr. Khalid (Pakistan), Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar), Mr. Shohokshi (Saudi Arabia), Mr. Kumalo (South Africa), Mr. Erwa (Sudan), Mr. Mejdoub (Tunisia) and Mr. Pamir (Turkey) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (spoke in French): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated

20 September 2002 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations, which will be issued as document S/2002/1058 and which reads as follows:

"I have the honour to request that, in accordance with its previous practice, the Security Council invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations to participate in the meeting of the Security Council to be held on Monday, 23 September 2002, regarding the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem."

I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite the Permanent Observer of Palestine to participate in the meeting, in accordance with the Council's provisional rules of procedure and with previous practice in this regard.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (spoke in French): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting today in response to the requests contained in a letter dated 20 September 2002 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations and Chairman of the Arab Group, document S/2002/1055, and a note verbale dated 20 September 2002 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, document S/2002/1056.

Members of the Council also have before them a letter dated 19 September 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2002/1049) and a letter dated 20 September 2002 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2002/1052).

I welcome the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, and I invite him to take the floor.

The Secretary-General: Less than a week ago, the Quartet met in this building and agreed on the need for a road map to achieve a permanent settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We agreed that it was essential and urgent for the Palestinians to take all possible steps to improve security by bringing an immediate end to violence and terror. But we also agreed that it had to be done within the context of an overall plan, which must address the political,

economic, humanitarian and institutional dimensions of the problem.

We agreed that the plan must spell out reciprocal steps to be taken by the parties in each of three phases, with a Quartet mechanism to monitor and assess each party's progress against specific benchmarks, culminating in the negotiation of a final and comprehensive settlement by 2005.

We agreed, in short, on the need for a process driven both by performance and by hope. That linkage is essential, and I cannot emphasize it too strongly. Yes, we need performance. But there must be hope, too. For without hope there will be no performance.

So, far from seeing the first steps towards implementing the Quartet's vision, the events of the past few days represent a tragic step in the opposite direction. Until last week, there had been six weeks of relative calm in Israel itself, but during the same period in the occupied territory at least 54 Palestinians were killed in Israeli military operations. Then, in the space of three days, 17 to 19 September, we saw a bomb explode in a Palestinian school and two new suicide attacks perpetrated against Israeli civilians inside Israel.

I have said over and over again that such acts are morally repugnant, and I say it again today. Each time those words have to be repeated, they become even more grimly apt. These acts are to be condemned both for the utterly unjustifiable loss of life, the pain and misery that they cause to innocent people and because they set back even further the prospect of a just and lasting settlement. They strike directly at that very hope which, as the Quartet agreed, is an essential driver of political progress.

Once again, I urge all Palestinians, especially the leaders of all political factions, to renounce this wicked instrument of terror, clearly and irrevocably, now and forever.

Last week, the Quartet recognized Israel's legitimate security concerns and repeated its demand that terrorist attacks be stopped once and for all. It also repeated its call on the Palestinian Authority to work with the United States and regional partners to reform security services and combat terrorism.

But how can the Palestinians respond to that call if what is left of the civil and security infrastructure of the Palestinian Authority, which is already gravely

weakened, is now in the process of being destroyed? Surely, such destruction will only set back even further the prospects for implementing necessary reforms and ensuring real improvements in the Authority's security performance.

Similarly, the continuing destruction of the capacity of ministries and municipalities to provide basic services such as water, electricity and education will hamper and even undermine efforts to meet humanitarian needs, whether by Palestinian or by international organizations. Further misery is hardly a basis for progress, whether political, security or economic.

The Quartet and our Arab partners in the region are working intensively with the Palestinian Authority to see that security and institutional reforms are implemented. But we can succeed only if the Government of Israel actively supports the process rather than hindering it. The systematic and literal grinding down of the Authority's headquarters in Ramallah, in which a further 10 Palestinians have been killed, is also likely to cause greater political instability in the West Bank and Gaza. Despite the re-imposition of curfews in most West Bank towns, it has already prompted mass demonstrations in a number of Palestinian cities, including Ramallah, and efforts to address key reform issues have been postponed as a result.

This too will set back the prospects for resuming the peace process. Once again, I appeal to Israel to take greater care to protect the lives of Palestinian civilians and to refrain from policies and actions that are in violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

My Special Envoy is in constant contact with both parties and has repeatedly spoken to Chairman Arafat and other senior Palestinian officials in Ramallah. He met this morning with Foreign Minister Peres and is now in Ramallah with the Secretary-General of the Palestine Liberation Organization, Abu Mazen. He is working in close coordination with the other members of the Quartet and key actors in the region.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not going to be resolved by military might alone, or by violent means of any kind. A policy based on forcing the other side to capitulate is a bankrupt policy. It is not working, and it will never work. It only encourages desperation. It weakens moderates and strengthens extremists. In the

end there will have to be a political settlement, negotiated between the two peoples on an equal basis — a settlement in which, as this Council has said, two States, Israel and Palestine, live side by side within secure and recognized borders.

Why not reach that end sooner rather than later? How many hundreds or thousands more have to die, how much more pain and misery must be endured before leaders on both sides find the vision and the courage to accept the inevitable?

Only a settlement on that basis can bring real peace and security to both peoples, and only a comprehensive approach can bring a settlement on that basis nearer.

The so-called sequential approach, which insists on full security as a precondition for progress on the political, humanitarian and institutional fronts, has clearly failed. Israel needs to understand that there will be no lasting security without a political settlement. And therefore, even while defending itself against terrorist attacks, Israel should cooperate actively with the Quartet's efforts to reach such a settlement within the next three years.

The Palestinians, on their side, need to understand that there will be no settlement without lasting security for Israel.

Both sides must be urged by all who have any influence over them to accept and act on those understandings so that at last there can be peace and security for both peoples, as part of a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement in the Middle East.

But I fear this vision will remain a distant mirage so long as our television screens — and the minds of all those involved — are filled with ugly scenes of death and destruction, whether in the streets of Tel Aviv or at the *Mugata'a* in Ramallah.

More than 80 years ago, the great Irish poet William Butler Yeats wrote, of a time in his country when

"Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world ...

The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity."

Alas, those words have been true of many times and many places since, and they seem all too true of the situation between Israelis and Palestinians today.

But let us not resign ourselves to that state of affairs. Let us help the best on both sides, Palestinian and Israeli, to regain their passion for peace and the conviction that brought them so close to agreement two years ago.

Let us resist the downward spiral into anarchy. Let us rebuild a centre that can hold.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the Secretary-General for his participation in the work of the Council today and for his statement.

The next speaker is the Permanent Observer of Palestine. I now call on him to take the floor.

Mr. Al-Kidwa (Palestine) (*spoke in Arabic*): I congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the current month. I also thank your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of the United States of America, for his stewardship of the Council last month. In addition, I should like to join you in welcoming the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, and I thank him for his tireless efforts to bring about peace in the region. We urge him to pursue those efforts, including his work with the Quartet.

Last Thursday, 19 September 2002, Israel, the occupying Power, sent its forces and tanks to reoccupy the compound of President Yasser Arafat in the city of Ramallah. The forces of occupation razed some buildings within the compound and blew up others, digging a trench around the only remaining and now damaged building, in which President Arafat and other officials and security officers remained. Israeli forces also built a barbed wire fence around that building. Meanwhile, the Israeli occupying forces opened fire on the area, resulting in at least one death and an unknown number of injuries and, of course, directly threatening the lives of President Arafat and those with him. The explosions, the razing and other forms of threat and coercion have continued for days.

Those grave and illegal criminal acts, which are yet another assault on the entire Palestinian people, were accompanied by announcements from Israeli officials that the Palestinian President would be deported from Palestinian territory and that he would be harmed, along with other statements concerning the

wish of Israel, the occupying Power, to arrest a number of the officials who remained with the President. Needless to say, those announcements are absolutely unacceptable, as they represent an escalation of the aggression and an attempt to further humiliate our leadership and our officials. Israel's repetition of such lies will amount to an encouragement of aggression.

After those events, the population of Ramallah and of many other Palestinian cities defied the curfew imposed upon them and took to the streets to express their rejection of the new Israeli criminal aggression. The reaction of the Israeli occupying forces was typical: they fired directly on the demonstrators, resulting in the martyrdom of five civilians and the injury of scores of others.

Clearly, there is no limit to the crimes committed by Mr. Sharon, by his Government and by his army in the series of war crimes and acts of State terrorism committed against the Palestinian people. Unfortunately, it is all being carried out with total impunity while the international community, represented by the Security Council, fails to fulfil its obligations because of the position of a permanent Council member.

Despite everything, we officially call on the Council to adopt a clear resolution demanding that Israel withdraw immediately from the headquarters of President Arafat, in addition to whatever other action the Council might deem appropriate in order to put an end to the humanitarian crisis being endured by our people and to the tragic confrontation between the two sides. It is not too late to do that, despite the regrettable and unwarranted delay of this Council meeting from last Friday until today. I express that position not only in my national capacity, but also as this month's Chairman of the Arab Group, which had requested an immediate Council meeting to consider this grave situation.

Throughout the years, the Palestinian people have been subjected to uprooting, displacement, denial of their existence, destruction, murder and confiscation of their land and property. They have been the target of massacres, from those at Deir Yassin and Kafr Qassem to that at the Jenin refugee camp. During the past two years in particular, since Mr. Sharon assumed power, Israel, the occupying Power, has not stopped its extrajudicial executions, its collective punishments such as home demolitions, the deliberate murder of

civilians and the infliction of maximum injury, continuing its abductions and arrests and causing widespread, deliberate destruction to property and farmland. Israel has continued to severely restrict the movement of persons and goods, including those of United Nations agencies and other humanitarian organizations, imposing closures and, most recently, imposing a curfew on hundred of thousands of people.

In brief, Israel, the occupying Power — even during periods of calm on the Palestinian side, including over the past six weeks — has continued to destroy the Palestinian Authority and its institutions and to destroy the entire life of the Palestinian people. Israel has reoccupied the areas under Palestinian control, as if to return the situation to what it had been before the peace process.

The political objectives of the Israeli side, in particular those of Mr. Sharon, are very clear: to destroy the Palestinian Authority and to break up the Palestinian leadership in order to create a situation of vacuum and anarchy with a view to subjugating the entire Palestinian population.

Its purpose is not only to prevent permanent settlement that would ensure Israel's withdrawal from occupied Palestinian territory, but to ensure the continuation of occupation and colonial settlement. In fact, Mr. Sharon, and unfortunately some of his supporters, do not want a different Palestinian leadership, but total absence of any leadership. He does not want a solution with the Palestinian people, but wants to force it to abandon its rights.

What I have just said is not an analysis. Mr. Sharon has been very clear in his public statements for those who want to listen and understand. Mr. Sharon has repeatedly said that he rejects any final settlement and that he wants long-term interim arrangements. Mr. Sharon has repeatedly said that Palestinians had to be harmed and totally defeated. He objected to the Mitchell recommendations until he managed to bury them. Mr. Sharon said that he had hoped to have killed President Arafat in Beirut. Mr. Sharon rewrote resolution 242 (1967) in open defiance of the Security Council and all those who supported the peace process, and he was categorically clear when he recently said that the Oslo Accords no longer exist. This is the very same Mr. Sharon who is the hero of the massacres of Sabra and Shatila, Qibya and Khan Yunis. He is the person responsible for all

kinds of war crimes and State-sponsored terrorism committed by the Israeli occupation forces during his premiership of the Israeli Government. He is the person who is pushing the entire region towards catastrophe.

For its part, Israel is trying to deny these political objectives and is waging psychological warfare against our people and leadership, in addition to a systematic global campaign of falsehoods and misleading lies. One major component of this is an attempt by Israel to project that all of the atrocities committed against our people are a reaction against suicide bombings, projecting the entire conflict as having started with all these explosions. Nothing could be further from the truth.

For our part, our position has been clear. We condemn these bombings against civilians in Israel. We condemn them as acts of terrorism that are harmful to the Palestinian national interests. In any case they are being committed by groups that oppose the peace process and the accords signed between the two sides. However, I would like to state here that the first suicide bombings took place towards the end of 1994. That is 27 years after the gruesome Israeli occupation began, and after Israel, the occupying Power, had already transferred about 350,000 Israeli settlers to occupy Palestinian land in order to settle there, colonize it and take it over.

No, the Israeli occupation and its reprehensible practices have not resulted from the suicide bombings — it actually created them. When the Israeli political position favoured the continuation of the peace process and efforts to achieve a final solution, those acts were not allowed to derail the peace process but rather were used to strengthen cooperation with the Palestinian Authority.

When the political position became Sharon's political position, the peace process was halted and the suicide bombings were used as a pretext to hit the Palestinian Authority and to revert to the pre-Oslo situation.

Why is the Palestinian Authority being targeted instead of assaulting the perpetrators of the suicide bombings? Why are the lives of the entire Palestinian people being destroyed instead of convincing them that there is a viable path to peace to fulfil their rights. Even if we accept the Israeli version of the story, how can a State be allowed to prevent attacks against its

own civilians through ferocious and destructive attacks against an entire other population?

If Mr. Sharon wanted a solution, he should have known by this time that there was no military solution. He is pursuing a military solution through suppression and brutality, because he does not want a political solution.

If we examine all of Israel's actions in the context of international law and Security Council resolutions, we find a clear case. It is a case of three decades of defiance of Security Council resolutions. Three decades and more. Twenty-eight resolutions have been adopted by the Council with regard to Israeli practices and measures in our occupied territory. All were rejected by the occupying Power; it did not comply with even one of them. These include resolutions on Israeli violations and breaches of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949; resolutions on illegal Israeli measures in Jerusalem; resolutions on the settlements; resolutions on deportations; resolutions on providing protection to the Palestinian civilians; and resolutions on dispatching envoys and fact-finding missions. All have been rejected and, in fact, defied through continued Israeli occupation.

Israel is the only State in the world that is officially recognized as an occupying Power by the Security Council. Israel is the only State engaged in settlement colonialism in the post-colonization era. It is the only State that has systematically violated and breached provisions of international law and international humanitarian law. It is the only country in the world that has openly rejected all relevant Security Council resolutions. As if that is not enough, Israel is the only State in the region that has illegally acquired nuclear weapons, in addition to other weapons of mass destruction. What has the Security Council done? Unfortunately, not much. What does the Council intend to do now? We hope that the Council will show the necessary seriousness in shouldering its responsibilities towards the implementation of its own resolutions.

Another classic component of Israeli campaigns is the attempt to divert attention to issues other than the main issue at hand and to shift the onus onto the Palestinian side. We see this clearly in focusing on the question of reform. It is true that this is a very important issue for us, but it remains a Palestinian matter and is not part of the international agenda that deals with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Unfortunately, some appear to want to implement Mr. Sharon's plans through this approach. They are trying to give democracy a new meaning that does not recognize free elections and are trying to impose a political system, even an electoral system, on our people. This crude intervention in the affairs of our people is unacceptable. In any case, this issue cannot substitute for addressing the main issue — namely, the continuation of the Israeli occupation and the need to end this occupation.

Yes, we will proceed with our second round of national elections, and we will do our best to rebuild our institutions and reform them. We welcome any international assistance in this regard. But at the same time, we understand the limitations of this process, and we know that no true, full democracy can exist under foreign occupation, and we know that we cannot build and maintain stable and effective institutions while killing, destruction and aggression continue.

Demanding that the Palestinian side fulfil its duties in the area of security following the destruction of its security apparatus, expecting it to complete reforms and establish true democracy while under occupation and continued oppression is ludicrous and impossible to achieve. Either intentionally or unintentionally, this for all practical purposes provides a new cover for Mr. Sharon and his policies, while blaming the Palestinian side for failure.

All this is happening while the peace process is being marginalized and extremist forces are rising. This hysteria must come to an end and the moment of truth must be faced, namely the truth of Mr. Sharon, his Government, his army and their policies. Otherwise, we are drifting to a course that will drag the entire region into a worse situation.

The only viable way to end the current tragedy and to return to the peace track is to pursue a comprehensive approach along with an effective international presence on the ground. What is meant by a comprehensive approach is not only how to deal with political, economic and security dimensions all at once, although these are important; but also to have a prior declaration of the form of the final settlement, not only on the basis of two States — Israel and Palestine — but also by identifying the borders between the two States, with the possibility of the two sides agreeing to some specific amendments thereto.

This border is, of course, the armistice line that is now commonly known as the 1967 border. On this basis, there would be specific stages and steps that would lead us from here to our final destination, the final settlement. This is the only approach that would create a different dynamic on the two sides and inevitably lead to support by the overwhelming majority of both sides for this settlement.

This approach also requires a genuine and effective international presence on the ground. This could be in the form of official observers in sufficient numbers and having a clear mandate, or, even better, in the form that was proposed by Secretary-General Kofi Annan: the establishment of a multinational force under Chapter VII of the Charter.

The parameters of the final settlement are widely known, and our direct experience has taught us that the only possible and available way to achieve peace is that just described. What, then, is the obstacle to this settlement? I do not want to get into that from my official position of responsibility, because, like every Palestinian, I am angry and furious at everything that is happening in our country and in our region. But we, the Palestinian people, have not lost hope, and we await your measures.

The President (spoke in French): I thank the Permanent Observer of Palestine for the congratulations that he extended to me.

Mr. Lancry (Israel): Mr. President, at the outset I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency for this month and to extend my congratulations to Ambassador John Negroponte on the outstanding manner in which he guided the deliberations of the Council last month. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, for his permanent contribution and concerted efforts to bring an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and to anchor peaceful coexistence in the Middle East.

The Security Council is meeting just days after a Palestinian suicide bomber turned an ordinary Tel Aviv street into a scene of horrific carnage. As workers and shoppers were going about their business, a Palestinian terrorist boarded a public city bus and detonated a powerful explosive charge that ripped through the crowded downtown district. When the dust settled, five Israeli civilians lay dead and more than sixty others were wounded, several of them seriously.

The Tel Aviv bombing followed a day of hell in which three Israelis were killed and three wounded in three separate incidents. Early in the morning, security forces discovered the charred body of David Buhbut. Buhbut, who was reported missing on Tuesday night, had gone shopping in an Arab village near his home. He was abducted and tortured for several hours, and his body was discarded in a dumpster where it was later found.

In the afternoon, Palestinian terrorists shot and killed Yosef Ajami, an Israeli civilian who was driving his car to Baka al-Gharbiya. And in the evening, Israeli policeman Moshe Hizkiyahu was killed as he responded to a report of a suspicious individual near the Umm el-Fahm Junction. As Officer Hizkiyahu approached, the man blew himself up. Two others were wounded in the attack, for which Islamic Jihad claimed responsibility.

These attacks come after a six-week period of relative quiet resulting from the extraordinary efforts of Israeli security forces. In recent weeks, Israeli forces have intercepted or thwarted scores of attempted attacks, including one in which a truck filled with hundreds of kilograms of explosives was seized, more than enough to bring a skyscraper crashing to the ground.

During this same period there have been some encouraging signs of internal Palestinian dialogue, including the voices of those who are beginning to question the value of the Palestinian campaign of terrorism and suicide bombings. Israel is following these discussions with great interest, and we are cautiously optimistic that they may signal a new direction for the Palestinian people.

As a result of this period of quiet, and out of genuine concern for the plight of the Palestinian population, Israel had begun to scale back some of the security precautions it had implemented. Various steps were taken to ease the freedom of movement of Palestinians, particularly the suspension of curfews.

It is no coincidence that terrorist attacks have resumed at precisely the moment that Israel has relaxed some of its security precautions. Steps that were taken to improve the humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian population have been cynically viewed by terrorists as opportunities. Any relaxation in Israeli security policy is seized upon, and in the past few days we have all witnessed the catastrophic result. This is

the clearest affirmation of what we have constantly asserted: that the only thing which stands between Palestinian terrorists and their Israeli victims is the preventive actions of the Israeli military.

These attacks have also affirmed the terrorists' violent rejection of any efforts at reconciliation between the parties, as they come amidst resurgent efforts of responsible parties to help stop the violence and bring the parties back to the negotiating table. Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Defence Minister Benjamin Ben-Eliezer have met a number of times with Palestinian officials and the meetings appeared promising. The Quartet met in New York in still another effort to revive the peace process. And yet, with every hopeful step forward, terrorism forces us to take an even greater step backward.

As Foreign Minister Peres observed in his recent speech before the General Assembly, despite the complexity of the conflicts in the Middle East, if it were not for terror we could have already resolved them. Terror, however, does not solve conflicts, it entrenches them.

Time and again Palestinian terrorist groups have shown their eagerness to scuttle any attempts to energize the peace process and restore hope to the people of the region. If the Palestinian leadership is unwilling to confront these demonstrated enemies of peace, then it undermines its claim to be a partner for peace.

The responsibility of the Palestinian leadership is clear. It must act decisively and resolutely to combat Palestinian terrorism. It must end the financial, logistical and moral support it has provided to terrorist organizations. It must dismantle the infrastructure upon which Palestinian terrorists depend. It must confiscate their weapons, arrest their leaders, shut down their offices and cut off their sources of funding. It must end the relentless incitement to violence in the official Palestinian Authority-controlled media. It must stop the glorification of violence and martyrdom in Palestinian schools. It must stop hanging portraits of terrorists from buildings, naming streets after them and holding them up as role models for other Palestinians to follow. In short, it must completely de-legitimize terrorism and suicide bombing in the eyes of its people. Every one of these obligations stem from specific Security Council resolutions, signed commitments and

the requirements of international law, which the Palestinian leadership has repeatedly flouted.

Instead of respecting its legal obligations, the Palestinian leadership, even to this day, continues to harbour terrorists and refuses to arrest them and bring them to justice. Inside the leadership compound in Ramallah are 50 individuals who have planned, funded and orchestrated scores of terrorist attacks and who are responsible for countless deaths of innocent civilians. Rather than take action against those it knows are complicit in acts of terrorism, the Palestinian Authority grants them immunity within its headquarters and protects them.

The Palestinian leadership must establish itself as the only party with the authority to exercise the use of force. It can no longer tolerate the existence of numerous armed groups, each with its own agenda, methods and doctrine, acting independently of one another. The monopoly of the use of force is one of the most basic responsibilities of national leadership. A leadership that fails to exercise that responsibility has also lost its legitimate right to lead.

These steps, which are expected by the international community, are more than within the power of the Palestinian leadership to undertake. That it has utterly refused to do so, even after more than two years of hostilities, is a most telling indication of the status of its commitment to ending violence and returning to a political process.

The only enduring solution to the conflict in the region is the one articulated by President Bush and endorsed by the Council, one in which two States live side by side in peace, security and coexistence. The Foreign Minister of Israel, addressing the General Assembly just a few days ago, again expressed Israel's enduring commitment to that vision.

Additional Security Council resolutions, particularly one-sided ones, are more than unhelpful; they are counterproductive. Resolutions that fail to address the context of terrorism, specifically demand the dismantling of terrorist organizations such as Islamic Jihad, Hamas and the Fatah Al-Aqsa Brigades and condemn suicide bombing in the strongest possible terms are simply a further incentive for the continuation of the Palestinian terrorist campaign. If international support can be garnered for one-sided resolutions, why should compromise be sought at the negotiating table?

As we know from history, achieving a vision of two States living in peace and security depends not on entertaining partisan initiatives, but on genuine and meaningful dialogue. But if violence and terror continue, it will be impossible to arrive at a political settlement.

Ending the terror, incitement and hatred, and engaging in genuine face-to-face negotiations, in a spirit of good faith and partnership, is the only way we can achieve the vision the Council has endorsed and pave the way for a brighter future for all the peoples of the region.

I would like to conclude by drawing the Council's attention to a story that I believe should serve not only as an inspiration, but also as a reminder that, even in the face of the devastating reality Palestinians and Israelis face each day, there remains among the peoples of this troubled region the basic need for coexistence.

Jonathan Jesner was a teenage student who was among those killed in Tel Aviv on Thursday. The Jesner family donated his kidney to a 7-year-old Palestinian girl, Yasmin Abu Ramila, who was suffering from a debilitating disease. This act provided her with a life-saving transplant.

In the past, the families of Palestinians who have lost their lives in the conflict with Israel have made similarly life-affirming and courageous gestures, donating their organs to Israelis suffering from illness and disease. These contributions are the very antithesis of terror. They provide a glimmer of hope that, despite the bitterness, death and mourning, we can still recognize common humanity and common destiny.

Mr. Negroponte (United States of America): Last Friday morning, the Security Council members gathered in this Chamber for a briefing by the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process to brief us on the recent meeting of the Quartet at United Nations Headquarters last week. Members of the Council expressed their support for the statement issued by the Quartet on 17 September 2002. That statement described some of the concrete, practical and forward-looking steps Quartet members, including United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Russian Foreign Minister Ivanov, European Union High Representative Solana and Secretary of State Powell, are taking with the parties to end violence and to advance political negotiations aimed at realizing President Bush's vision of two States, Israel and an

independent, viable and democratic Palestine, living side by side in peace and security. The parties and key regional Arab States also participated in the Quartet meetings, which contributed to restoring confidence and trust in the Middle East. The Quartet meeting coincided with what appeared to be a terrorist bombing at a Palestinian school near Hebron that wounded five Palestinian children. The Quartet deplored and condemned morally repugnant violence and terror.

Palestinian extremists reacted immediately to the Quartet's efforts with more devastating acts of terror: Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad competed in their claims of responsibility for two suicide bombing attacks in Israel on 18 and 19 September 2002. The second, in Tel Aviv, killed six Israelis and one Scottish national on a civilian bus. Sixty people were injured, many of whom were mutilated by the blast. Nearly all Security Council members condemned these attacks publicly, and privately within the Security Council consultations room. Most of the Governments represented in this Chamber have also made timely statements condemning these attacks and the groups that continue to perpetrate them. We encourage others to join us in condemning these acts of terror in the strongest possible terms.

The United States is intensively engaged in efforts to calm the situation in the Middle East. Israel's recent actions in the Ramallah Muqata'a are not helpful, either in achieving a lasting end to violence or in promoting vital reforms. The United States has made this clear at the highest levels of the Israeli Government. It is essential that Israel consider carefully the consequences of its actions and avoid further measures that escalate rather than reduce tension and violence. The further destruction by Israel of the Palestinian Authority's remaining civilian and security infrastructure will not improve Israel's security situation; on the contrary, it will only set back further the prospects for implementing the reforms necessary to ensure real improvements in the Palestinian Authority's security performance. It is also likely to have serious negative consequences for political stability in the West Bank and Gaza, and therefore for the prospects of resuming the political process.

The United States objectives are clear: ending terrorism, promoting Palestinian civil reform, restoring active security cooperation, alleviating the humanitarian situation inside Palestinian areas and

working towards a resumption of a political dialogue that leads to a lasting peace. Progress on these objectives is critical to restoring trust and confidence between the two sides. A common front, exemplified by the Quartet and those that support its efforts, can make a real difference in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. I call on all members of the international community to support and encourage steps on the ground that will contribute concretely and objectively to meeting these objectives.

We will not support the adoption of a one-sided text that fails to recognize that this conflict has two sides, that fails to condemn acts of terror and the groups that perpetrate them and that fails to call for the dismantling of the networks that threaten all the people of the Middle East, both Arab and Israeli.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): After six weeks, innocent Israelis again became the victims of terrorist acts. Terrorism builds nothing, destroys everything and must be fought vigorously. Terrorism works against the interests of the Palestinian people. President Arafat and the Palestinian Authority must do everything they can to stop Palestinian terrorism and eliminate terrorist structures. Those responsible must be brought to justice.

During the same period, dozens of Palestinians have been killed by Israeli military action, among them many innocent civilians. Norway has appealed to Israel to stop the ongoing military operation against the headquarters of President Arafat. We do not think that the military actions against him will stop terrorism; nor do we think that they will further Israel's long-term security needs.

Norway supports the conclusions of the Quartet meeting held on 17 September. We support the work done to formulate a road map that can identify a way out of the present crisis. Security for both Israelis and Palestinians has to be restored. But equally important is the need to restore the political dialogue. The Middle East conflict cannot be solved through the use of arms. The solution has to be political.

Norway fully supports the Palestinian reform process. It is now more important than ever to create an accountable and efficient Palestinian Authority. Progress has been made despite the very difficult circumstances in which the reform efforts are being carried out.

However, reforms cannot be implemented in a vacuum. The present security situation undermines the reform efforts. The renewed attacks on President Arafat's compound have jeopardized these efforts. The success of the reforms also depends on Palestinians seeing improvements both in living conditions and in political prospects. The Palestinians must be given hope. Norway therefore urges Israel to stop actions that undermine the Palestinian reform efforts and to assist in creating an environment that is conducive to supporting the reform efforts.

Norway is deeply alarmed by the deteriorating humanitarian situation of the Palestinians. We were pleased to hear high-level assurances from Israel of increased cooperation with humanitarian agencies, but we have to note that officials of those agencies are reporting only marginal improvements on the ground. Norway recognizes Israel's legitimate security needs, but the humanitarian needs of the Palestinian population must also be safeguarded.

The humanitarian plight of the Palestinian people is now quickly deteriorating. The curfews continue to confine to their homes, on average, almost half a million Palestinians in more than 20 cities and towns, sometimes for days at a time. The business sector is paralysed. Malnutrition among children is increasing to unacceptable levels, and unemployment rates are above 50 per cent. Norway therefore supports the recommendation of the Bertini report to dispatch a mission to develop a detailed plan on how to deal with humanitarian needs. Norway urges Israel to fully cooperate with aid agencies and to lift the harsh restrictions imposed on the Palestinians. The humanitarian situation should continue to be followed closely by the international community. We therefore welcome the decision by the Quartet to hold a ministerial meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in December, in parallel with the holding of a new Quartet meeting.

The present situation is deeply tragic for all those who wish for peace and who are held hostage by extremist and brutal action. Norway urges maximum restraint and calls upon the parties to allow the Quartet to continue to work out a road map that can bring about new positive momentum in the efforts to establish security, peace and a lasting political solution.

Mr. Levitte (France) (*spoke in French*): France fully endorses the statement to be made shortly by the

representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union.

The situation in Israel and the Palestinian territories has tragically deteriorated in recent days. Given the responsibilities conferred upon the Security Council by the Charter, the gravity of the situation fully justifies the Council's meeting today to hear the views of the parties and to carefully review the situation and respond to it accordingly.

Renewed hopes of returning to the path of dialogue and peace negotiations have been dashed by the recent terrorist attacks against Israel in Jerusalem and in Tel Aviv, which have claimed many innocent victims, as well as by the terrorist act last week that deliberately targeted Palestinian schoolchildren in Hebron. France condemned in the strongest possible terms these heinous and unjustifiable acts. They discredit the cause they claim to serve. I reiterate here in the Council France's solidarity with and condolences to the families of the victims of these barbaric acts.

Hope was destroyed also by those who, blindly or deliberately, were unable, or did not wish, to put to good use the relative calm that had prevailed for almost six weeks. By continuing its military operations during that period — when no attacks took place against civilians in Israel — and in so doing killing many Palestinian civilians, the Israeli army played right into the hands of the most extremist Palestinian factions.

Ongoing military operations aimed at the offices of the President of the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah are unacceptable. France demands that they cease immediately, and it has said so to the Israeli authorities. Meeting violence with more violence, laying siege to the Palestinian Authority and destroying its infrastructures can in no way contribute to the fight against terrorism or to meeting Israel's legitimate security concerns. Rather, these acts further impede the Authority's ability to combat the terrorist scourge. They prevent the implementation of the reforms entered into with the unanimous support of the international community and which are essential to establishing a new partnership for peace. Reforms must be encouraged, not slowed down. The current operation against the Palestinian presidency can only delay them.

It is, of course, essential that the Palestinian Authority use every means at its disposal to prevent terrorists from acting and to arrest and bring to justice the perpetrators of, and masterminds behind, terrorist

acts, and punish them as severely as possible. France's message in this regard is unambiguous.

It is equally essential that Israel realize that the security imperative — which is entirely legitimate — cannot serve as its only strategy. I would echo the words of the Secretary-General, as well as the statement made by his Special Envoy to the Council last Friday, in saying that the approach taken, which is based on security alone — the so-called sequential approach — has failed. We must rekindle hope. This will require not only an improvement in the security situation but also a commitment to, and the implementation of, parallel progress in other areas and in the political area in particular.

From this perspective, the most recent meeting of the Quartet made it possible to chart a course towards the resumption of the peace process. France, like many other countries, welcomed this positive development. The general framework for a three-phase plan leading to the settlement of the conflict has been defined. The framework sets out the stages of the plan and the measures that are expected of the parties as well as a timetable for their implementation. It gives the Quartet a key monitoring role.

In the current context of mutual defiance between the parties, we deem essential the creation of a third-party mechanism to assess and monitor the implementation by each party of the measures expected of it. The early holding of an international conference could also make a useful contribution to defining parameters as well as the role of each party, thereby enhancing the chances of success of future peace negotiations.

The course set by the Quartet must be maintained and its various elements further defined. The members of the Quartet are committed to doing so, and they will continue to work towards that end in the coming weeks. But it is the parties themselves which must demonstrate in the field, above and beyond words and professions of faith, their dedication to the goals set by the international community. This will require, among other things, implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, all of which are equally binding, in their entirety, upon all parties.

Sir Jeremy Greenstock (United Kingdom): Let me first make very clear the strength of the United Kingdom condemnation of all terrorist attacks. We deeply regret the loss of life and extend our sympathies

to the families of the recent victims, which on this occasion included a 19-year-old British national, Jonathan Jesner, to whom the Permanent Representative of Israel referred just now. There can be no valid excuse for the indiscriminate and deliberate taking of civilian lives, of any nationality, under whatever circumstances.

Both Palestinians and Israelis must take action to break the cycle of violence and to help the other party to do likewise. We should be clear that such attacks are aimed at the search for peace itself. We should not let rejectionists succeed in derailing what progress has been achieved and what we want to achieve in the future. If the logic of peace were the priority, the Israeli Government and the Palestinian Authority would be working together to deal with the threat to the peace which they both claim to seek.

We are seriously concerned by the worsening humanitarian situation. The desperation of the Palestinian population fuels the extremists and stifles hopes of a political process. While the Palestinian Authority needs to take concrete steps against terrorists, Israel should do more to ease restrictions on Palestinians and to enable economic life to recover and the humanitarian situation to improve. We are working with others to help alleviate the suffering and to agree a long-term resolution to this crisis.

The United Kingdom's diplomacy in all its forms is aimed at achieving an end to the violence and at restoring the political process. But we have learnt by now that the international community cannot impose peace. We are all now close to disgust that the parties continue to fail to appreciate that there can be no military solution. Only a return to the negotiating table will provide the peaceful solution which we are convinced both peoples want and deserve.

Israel has a right to exist in security. It is entitled to take steps to protect itself from terrorist attack, but these should be neither disproportionate nor excessive. Deployment of Israeli tanks in Ramallah and Gaza, and further destruction of President Arafat's compound, are not the answer. The blockade is unjustified and should end. Not only is it counterproductive for the search for long-term security for Israel; it also flies in the face of the Security Council's sensible and widely supported prescriptions for eventual peace, most recently expressed in resolution 1397 (2002).

The Palestinians have a right to establish a sovereign, viable and independent Palestinian State. The Palestinian Authority must do all in its power to prevent terrorist attacks. We welcome its condemnation of the latest bombings and recent pleas to the Palestinian population to renounce violence. We stand ready to help it rebuild and reform itself so that it can regain the confidence of the international community in its work to clamp down on violence.

The Quartet set out on 17 September its commitment to a concrete three-phase implementation road map. It did this after consultation with Israel, the Palestinian Authority and representatives of the Arab League follow-up committee. We fully support the Quartet in its efforts because they represent the hope of which the Secretary-General spoke so eloquently to us this morning. Our focus now should be on agreement to a detailed road map and its implementation. Bad decisions and extremist action are standing in the way.

Mr. Ryan (Ireland): Ireland is fully associated with the statement that will be made later in the debate by the Permanent Representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union.

At a time when prospects for political progress in the Middle East appeared on the increase and when the international community has been actively engaged in nurturing these tentative hopes, the events of recent days — suicide bombings that have again taken Israeli lives, a terrorist attack on Palestinian schoolchildren and the attack on President Arafat's compound in Ramallah — have come as a bitter disappointment.

The Secretary-General recalled earlier that only last Tuesday, the Quartet, here in New York, committed itself to the early completion of a road map that would guide the parties to a settlement that would secure the legitimate rights of both parties. Israel would gain full recognition by its neighbours and guarantees of its national security, and the Palestinian people would see an end to occupation and the realization of their right to sovereignty.

Such a road map would be the beginning of a process, not its conclusion, but it offers a real hope for progress towards the implementation of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and towards realizing the vision enshrined in the declaration of the Beirut Arab Summit, in statements by world leaders, including President Bush, and in Security Council resolution 1397 (2002).

We have seen in recent months a strong and encouraging movement towards reform in Palestinian political life. This movement holds great promise for the establishment of a democratic and accountable Government in a future Palestine. The demand for this movement arose from within Palestinian society itself, and it has attracted the deserved support of the international community.

We have seen a gathering consensus in large parts of Palestinian society and political life against terrorism, not only as a self-defeating tactic but as wrong in itself and as a danger to prospects for the early achievement of a Palestinian State and a region truly at peace.

We have seen over recent weeks a clear lull in terrorist actions and tentative moves towards a broad ceasefire. If such a ceasefire had been allowed to take root, it would have done more for the security of Israel and Israelis and for the security of Palestinians than any number of security measures, closures, curfews, security structures or withdrawals. Further suicide bombings, attempted suicide bombings and the reaction by Israeli forces against President Arafat's headquarters have dealt those hopes a severe blow.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ireland deplored the despicable attacks against Israeli civilians, saying that they were clearly intended to wreck progress towards restoring the peace process. Mr. Cowen pointed out that those attacks had been carried out against the express wishes of the Palestinian Authority and despite its efforts to prevent such attacks. They came after a period of six weeks during which there were no Israeli civilian casualties inside Israel, while, as we heard from Special Coordinator Roed-Larsen last Friday, more than 50 Palestinians, mostly innocent people — men, women and children — died in Israeli military operations, including extrajudicial killings.

The actions of the Israeli armed forces in Ramallah in the past three days have also dealt hopes for peace a severe blow. The almost complete destruction of the centre and symbol of Palestinian national life can only convey the message that the Israeli Government is not interested in any renewal of Palestinian political life that comes from within Palestinian society but is intent on imposing its own terms on any such renewal.

My Foreign Minister has called on Israel to withdraw its forces from President Arafat's headquarters and to exercise the greatest restraint. He said that terrorist attacks on innocent Israeli civilians, for which there can be no justification, must not be allowed to provoke a reaction that in turn causes civilian casualties and is totally counterproductive and damages the prospects for resolving the conflict. Ireland considers that these actions by the Israeli security forces are completely unacceptable. They must end immediately.

Ms. Catherine Bertini's recent report on the humanitarian situation in the occupied territories and the latest socio-economic report by the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator in the Occupied Territories paint a truly grim picture. The Palestinian economy has, according to Ms. Bertini, by and large collapsed. Most of the Palestinian population is now living at levels of severe poverty, with increasing malnutrition and serious interruptions in children's education.

The international community also has a responsibility to act to redress the situation, and Ireland looks forward to the detailed plan that United Nations agencies will submit to the ministerial-level meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in December. Above all, however, Israel itself has a clear responsibility to address immediately, in a manner consistent with its security, the effects of its closures and curfews. The impact of Israeli measures has had severe consequences for the daily lives of Palestinians. And this is no small point. Hope abandoned is no basis for a lasting peace. And the presence of hope is surely an indispensable basis for building the peace that both peoples want and deserve.

Israel also has a responsibility to halt the process of settlement expansion and consolidation, which undermines hope among Palestinians that Israel will ever agree to a sovereign Palestine.

Grievance, bitterness, insecurity, victimhood, manifest injustice: these are the great enemies of achieving peace in the Middle East. Israel wants and deserves the security and peace its people need. Palestinians want and deserve a sense of hope, a sense of belonging and a home that is fully theirs and that will allow Palestine and its people an honourable place in the world.

And we here in the Security Council must meet our responsibility in helping to achieve these goals.

Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): First, Mr. President, I would like to thank you sincerely for agreeing to the Arab Group's request for this public meeting because of the renewed violence in the Middle East and the extremely grave situation in Ramallah. The delegation of Cameroon is deeply concerned. We would like to reaffirm the need to respect the physical integrity and the political survival of Palestinian institutions. Two sides are needed to build peace and to have dialogue.

Three days ago, I unambiguously condemned the escalation of violence and the recent attacks in the Middle East. Today, given the tragic and terrifying increase in bloodshed, there is a serious danger that we and our peoples will be overwhelmed by despair. It seems that the chance for peace is yet again drifting further and further away and that the region may yet again be caught up in madness and confrontation. Despite all this, however, we have to hope, for, as the Secretary-General just said, we need hope. His words sound even more tragic today.

Just three days ago, Cameroon was hopeful about the peace plan offered by the Quartet, which takes the Council's concerns and the requirements for a lasting settlement into account. It seemed to us then, as it seems to us today, to be capable of restoring peace to Palestine, the land of peace. At that time, Cameroon drew attention to the difficulties that would inevitably arise. More specifically, I called on the sides to adhere fully to the peace plan prepared by the Quartet. We insisted that neither party, on the basis of some contingency or other, should be able to call the plan into question.

Unfortunately, this was at a time of relative calm that had lasted several weeks. Now, just when real hope seemed to be emerging, further violence is jeopardizing the new momentum. I would recall Tolstoy's words to the effect that no reform imposed by violence will set the wrong to rights. Wisdom has no need of violence.

Thus, I call on the parties once again to respect human life, to act with moderation and to exercise restraint. We still believe in the virtues of dialogue and negotiation. Only dialogue and negotiation can bring a just and lasting peace to the Middle East. We call on the Palestinians and Israelis to demonstrate more courage and a greater sense of history by deciding

resolutely to return to the path of dialogue towards a lasting peace.

Is there any need to point out that a legal framework already exists that could ease tension and lead to a comprehensive settlement? I refer to the relevant resolutions of the Security Council — resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 1397 (2002) — which are the bases of the Quartet's road map. We believe that action undertaken in respect for international law would help to bring about a real, just and lasting peace. It is only through a political settlement that the legitimate aspirations of both sides to live in peace, within secure and recognized borders, can actually be realized. Let us therefore give the Quartet's peace plan a chance. It offers a methodical and comprehensive settlement that takes account of the political, security, economic and humanitarian aspects to be addressed in parallel, not in sequence.

History is what men and women make it. It is up to the men and women of Israel and Palestine to write and to make their history together. To that end, as Cameroon has said before and will say again, it is essential for the men, women and young people of the Middle East to launch the process of developing and transforming their ways of thinking and acting so as to stem this mindless tide of violence and to prime the well of love.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are meeting in this Chamber once again to lament and reject the recent escalation of violence in the Middle East. Following a few weeks of relative calm, the enemies of peace have once again achieved their aim. There has been new bloodshed and renewed terrorist acts, leading to scenes of horror. The Israel Defence Forces are again laying siege to the headquarters of President Arafat and imperilling not only his life, but the very possibility of reform in the various components of the Palestinian Authority.

Let there be no doubt that Colombia rejects terrorist attacks in Israeli territory and the recent attack against a school in Palestine. Israel's excessive use of force and the siege of Arafat's headquarters do not contribute to establishing the political climate necessary to overcome the stalemate in a process that began two years ago.

The members of the Security Council have supported the diplomatic activities of the Quartet, of which the United Nations is a participating member.

The Quartet's plan, put forward about a week ago, is comprehensive and includes various aspects that will have to be developed in parallel with one another. As we have said previously in this Chamber, the political, security, economic and humanitarian aspects must be addressed simultaneously. While the first phase of the Quartet's plan touches on all these aspects, we must ensure that one will not prevail as a precondition for the others.

The Quartet, with the participation of other States, has also established some working groups to assist the Palestinian Authority in making reforms in various areas. There can be no doubt that acts of violence and terror impede this process, as do actions taken to undermine the Palestinian Authority, which fly in the face of the forces for change supported by the international community.

The elections in Palestine scheduled for early next year will be a decisive moment. The leadership chosen in those elections should enjoy the international community's support, as it will be responsible for implementing the next phase of the plan — the establishment of the Palestinian State.

The establishment of the Palestinian State is not just an option, it is a necessity. It means recognizing the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, as acknowledged in many United Nations resolutions.

The last phase of the Quartet's plan provides for direct negotiations between the parties with a view to reaching a definitive solution. Both the reforms and the political process must be accompanied by measures implemented by Israel to improve the living standards of the Palestinian people, thereby making it possible for economic activities to resume, facilitating the movement of goods and peoples and lifting blockades and curfews. Both parties must make a great effort to avoid being overwhelmed by the violence, or, rather, not to give way to the extremists who see violence as the only course of action.

A few days ago we received a report from Mrs. Catherine Bertini, the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General, assessing the humanitarian situation in the territories. That report is worrying and confirms what we all feared. The lack of mobility is having an impact on the people, as they are unable to get to work. Their health has deteriorated, in addition to the fact that in some emergency situations ambulances have been

denied access. Education has also been affected, as neither teachers nor children can get to the schools. The lack of income is causing a food crisis, and approximately 300 localities have no regular water supply. In the words of the report, there is a serious and growing humanitarian crisis in the West Bank and Gaza.

The report contains a series of recommendations that must be taken into account by both the Palestinian Authority and Israel, including the obligation to respect international humanitarian law and the applicability to the occupied territories of the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Mr. Aguilar Zinser (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Over the past few days, the efforts of the Quartet to draw up a plan of action leading finally to peace in the Middle East has borne fruit. A time frame was prepared, with a three-phase plan designed to obtain a lasting peace built on the vision of two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace within secure borders and with normal, productive working relations with all their neighbours.

The Quartet's efforts also led to the search for a mechanism to implement, monitor and verify agreements to be arrived at on the basis of the three-phase plan. Agreement was reached on considering the idea of setting up a monitoring system, to be carried out by parties from outside the region who could confirm that the commitments entered into by the parties were being implemented.

Under those circumstances, the international community began to feel that the peace effort might bear fruit. Those expectations have been once again thwarted, however, by the violent developments of the past few days. The resumption of suicide attacks and reprisals by Israel are two elements that show clearly the endless vicious cycle. The terrorists who carried out those acts did so with the clear intention of undermining the peace process that could have been under way. But it is also clear that the reprisals carried out by Israel, whatever their objective, also represent an obvious movement backwards and a means to thwart hopes for peace.

Mexico condemns and repudiates the terrorist acts that have claimed Israeli victims in the past few days. Nothing could be more effective in preventing the recurrence of such acts than resolute action by the Palestinian Authority to isolate and neutralize armed

groups, such as Hamas, which resort to and glorify terrorism. The Palestinian Authority must dissociate itself, actively and definitively, from terrorism. It must make a genuine and sincere effort to prevent the continuing dissemination of hatred. We should ask ourselves, however, how the Palestinian Authority can do so if it is being subjected, as it clearly is, to constant harassment and destruction.

Time and again my delegation has expressed my country's conviction that reprisals and efforts to destroy the Palestinian Authority simply encourage violence and escalate hatred. Israel should be betting on peace and assuming all the risks of such a wager.

My country appeals to Israel to act in such a way as to help build confidence. This would include facilitating and supporting humanitarian assistance to alleviate tension in the occupied Palestinian territories so that acceptable living conditions could gradually be established there. It is imperative that we face up to the economic and humanitarian situation, which has been deteriorating in an unacceptable manner because of the actions of Israel.

Mexico once again reaffirms its support for the efforts being made by the Quartet. We will be considering the draft resolution that is before Council members with a view to seeking consensus and, indeed, demonstrating the clear will of the Council and reiterating our desire for peace.

Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius): The Council is meeting today to discuss once again the situation in the Middle East following the escalation of the violence in the past few days. We have seen such violence before, but today, if the current situation is not brought under control, we run the risk of completely compromising the peace process, and we even face the possibility of wide-scale conflict.

Mauritius condemns all violence, be it in the form of reprehensible terrorist attacks and suicide bombings or in the form of the unchecked and disproportionate use of military force. Mauritius condemns, in the strongest terms, the continued siege and the systematic destruction of Chairman Arafat's compound in total defiance of resolution 1402 (2002), and we demand an immediate end to the blockade as well as the withdrawal of the Israeli Defence Forces from Ramallah.

We fully understand and support Israel's need to provide security to its people, and we deplore and condemn the attacks on its civilians. What we cannot understand is the unwarranted and unjustified siege on the Palestinian Authority, which still represents the only authority with which any peace agreement can be contemplated. The surgical destruction of the buildings around Chairman Arafat's compound, aimed at isolating and humiliating him, constitutes a serious act of provocation that, in the mildest terms, not only is most unhelpful and will not stop the cycle of violence, but in fact will lead to more uncontrolled violence and more terrorist attacks. Mauritius recognizes Chairman Arafat as the elected and legitimate leader of the Palestinian people; subjugating the latter will only incite hatred and violence and will therefore serve only the motives of the extremist groups.

Mauritius is convinced that Israel's legitimate concerns will be met only through cooperation and dialogue, rather than by destroying the Palestinian Authority. The continued siege on the Palestinian headquarters will also seriously undermine and slow the reform process, the importance of which we all underscore. The need to build a new and efficient Palestinian security capability on a sound basis of unified command, transparency and accountability should be the number-one priority. We call on Israel to review its conduct and strategy in dealing with the Palestinian Authority. Israel must realize that an improvement in the security situation can come about only if the Palestinian security institutions are not undermined and if they are allowed to operate freely and effectively.

A few months before the January elections, it is all the more important that all necessary precautions be taken to create an atmosphere conducive to the organization of those elections, in respect of which we call on all parties to ensure that they are free and fair and that nothing is done that could potentially predetermine their outcome.

As long as we do not address the root cause of the Middle East problem, we will not be able to find a long-term, durable solution. The problem of occupation and the need for the Palestinians to have their own homeland must be seriously considered. While we fully support the vision of the two States living in peace with secure borders, it is imperative that that vision be given some material shape.

In that respect, we support the efforts of the Quartet for a solution to the Middle East crisis based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 1397 (2002), as well as the road map outlined at its meeting last week. We equally support the Quartet's vision of a three-phase plan of action for achieving a two-State solution. But we believe that the first priority after the elections of January 2003 should be a declaration of statehood for the Palestinians, with provisional borders. Such a step will be the single most effective confidence-building measure, which, in our view, will go a long way in curbing the violence, as the people of Palestine will thus be given a real ray of hope.

In order to make that happen, however, there must be strong commitments on both sides to achieve those goals. Israel should immediately stop the siege of the Palestinian Authority, withdraw its forces from the occupied areas and return to positions held prior to September 2000. It should also stop the illegal settlements. We call on the Palestinians, on their side, to honour their commitment to renounce violence and terrorist attacks.

The chilling briefing by Mr. Roed-Larsen on the humanitarian situation in the occupied territories last Friday highlighted the need for urgent action by the international community. It is important that we take a fresh look at the recommendations contained in the Bertini report and that we harness all efforts towards the alleviation of the sufferings of the innocent Palestinians. The statistics showing 50 per cent of the population living on food hand-outs, a 50-per-cent unemployment rate, 70-per-cent poverty levels and an acute shortage in the food supply should not go unheeded. We call on the international community to assist the Palestinian people by implementing without delay the recommendations of Ms. Bertini, the Personal Humanitarian Envoy of the Secretary-General. We also call on Israel to lift the restrictions imposed on the Palestinian people and to continue releasing funds — collected as tax revenues — that are due to the Palestinians, in order to relieve their economic hardships.

Six weeks of calm in the Middle East has not helped in making any significant headway in the peace process. It proves that a sequential approach is not going to work. Mauritius therefore supports the strategy outlined by the Secretary-General for a parallel approach, rather than a sequential one, to deal

with the Middle East situation in a comprehensive manner. The diplomatic and political process should continue, along with discussions on the security and economic dimensions.

Mauritius believes that the Council must send a clear message to both sides that violence will not help to bring peace; it must be stopped, and negotiations must continue. At a time when so much importance is being given to the need for Members to respect and comply with all Security Council resolutions, it is essential that the centrality and the credibility of the Council be made to be unreservedly and indiscriminately respected by one and all.

Mr. Traoré (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): After a brief period of calm that gave rise to hope for a return to peace in the Middle East, the region, sadly, is again plunging into a cycle of violence. For several days, we have witnessed a resumption of suicide bomb attacks and a disproportionate reaction by the Israeli authorities. Those reprehensible acts, which are contrary to the spirit of international legality, encourage the extremists on both sides and lead to a resurgence of the old demons of intolerance.

It is obvious that the Palestinian groups targeting Israelis are harming the cause of self-determination and the creation of an independent Palestinian State. In the same manner, the prolonged siege on the headquarters of President Arafat and the near-destruction of existing infrastructure are part of a process of weakening the Palestinian Authority, which, under such conditions, cannot meet Israel's security demands.

My delegation vigorously condemns the suicide attacks that are killing innocent Israeli civilians, as well as the continued siege and destruction of Palestinian infrastructure. Such policies serve neither the interests of the Palestinian people nor those of the Israeli people. The only solution for putting an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict — and we will never stop repeating it — is the cessation of hostilities and the return to the negotiating table, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Such negotiations must be part of a comprehensive framework that takes account of both the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people and of Israel's right to security. They must also take into account, simultaneously and equally, the political, humanitarian and security aspects of the question. To do so — above and beyond the necessary political will

of the Israeli and Palestinian leaders — the international community in general and the Security Council in particular must continue their efforts to reach a rapprochement between the two parties. In that context, let me mention the recent meeting of the Quartet, held in New York on 17 September, which laid down a road map that we find reasonable and that we support. That three-phase plan, if followed consistently and implemented with conviction, will be one of the surest ways of restoring confidence and leading the Palestinian and Israeli peoples towards a way of extricating themselves from the crisis, in a way that is honourable, just and lasting.

My delegation does not doubt for a single minute that with the joint efforts of the international community, whose praiseworthy initiatives and commitment are not lacking, we will together attain our objective and contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security.

Mr. Wehbe (Syria) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset, Mr. President, to thank you for convening this meeting of the Security Council, although it was somewhat delayed, since we had requested it on Friday. We do not understand the delay, in view of the fact that the situation in the region is boiling.

All of us have stated our views about the grave danger in the region, noting especially that recent days have witnessed catastrophic developments on the Palestinian scene, developments without precedent since the war crimes of the Second World War. Many of us thought that, especially with the advent of the new millennium, we had seen the last of the deliberate destruction of buildings with their residents — including children, women and old people — still inside and the wide-scale destruction of infrastructure. But that is the reality in the occupied Palestinian territories, where the Israeli occupying forces commit the most heinous and atrocious crimes against Palestinian civilians, without being deterred by any party, and without even the minimum of respect for international law and international humanitarian values. In addition, they have no respect for standards on which the peoples of the world have agreed, as embodied in conventions that have become symbols of human values and civilization.

Israel is armed to the teeth with all kinds of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, which constitute an arsenal of weapons of mass destruction

and murder; in full view, its bulldozers demolish the homes of the children and the dispossessed among the Palestinian people. Israel is pursuing its daily hobby: killing and destruction. This represents the worst kind of defiance and contempt for international legality and ethical norms and values.

We have heard that the Security Council has adopted 28 resolutions on this matter. Israel has paid no heed to those resolutions. Can there be any greater defiance of international legality? If another State had failed to comply with only one resolution, the world would have been up in arms.

Syria has warned over and over again that what is currently taking place in the occupied Arab territories is part of a strategy pursued by the Israeli Government, which has made its defiance of international law and of Council resolutions a regular policy. We have stated before, and we state again here that the Israeli Government has no peace strategy. Its strategy does not require in-depth analysis: it is built on waging wars, perpetuating occupation and suppressing the aspirations of our people in the occupied territories to realize their hope for freedom, dignity and an end to the occupation.

A case in point with regard to the anti-peace Israeli policy is the statement made by the Israeli Prime Minister a few days ago. He said that Arabs have no right to the territories occupied in 1967. He added that Israel has sovereignty over those territories. Do we really need further proof that the Israeli Government does not want peace, that it insists on occupation and that it resorts to military force, which is nothing but a bankrupt policy, as His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan said this morning?

Today the Palestinian people is facing the worst kind of unjust occupation, siege and systematic assassinations, without seeing any serious initiative to put an end to the atrocious modern-day massacre that Israel is committing before the eyes and ears of the world. More than 70 days have gone since the beginning of the monstrous siege of Nablus, without the international community doing anything to save those hundreds of thousands of women, children and other innocent civilians. This applies also to other cities in the territories.

We are talking about the destruction of Palestinian institutions. Israel has killed over 80 Palestinians in a month and a half. It was not asked to

put an end to its machine of death and vengeance. No one made a move, even though the world knows that the Israeli pretext of fighting Palestinian violence no longer holds. Does this silence indicate a new international law in progress? One based on condoning war crimes and violations of human rights to satisfy Israel and accommodate the whims of its leaders in shedding more Palestinian blood? Is this a new international law that has replaced existing international law, international humanitarian law and the Geneva Conventions?

The Arabs and the international community agreed on the conditions for the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace in the region on the basis of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973), as well as on the principle of land for peace. At the recent Beirut Summit, the Arab leaders adopted a comprehensive peace initiative based on international law and relevant Security Council resolutions. Nonetheless, Israel insists on occupation and daily acts of aggression against the Arabs. Against this background, the Arabs are more determined than ever to uphold their inalienable rights and continue to believe in international legitimacy as the road leading to a just and comprehensive peace.

Before Council members is a draft resolution that the Arab Group has endorsed unanimously. It expresses grave concern over the tragic and violent events engulfing the Palestinian territories since the year 2000, including the re-occupation of the Palestinian Authority's headquarters. The draft resolution reiterates the need to respect international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War of 1949. The draft resolution demands that Israel withdraw its forces from the Palestinian cities. Syria supports this draft resolution and believes that it is the lowest common denominator on which Council members can agree. Would our Council then open a window of hope to the Palestinian people who have been living under an unjust siege and unacceptable practices?

This is what we urge the Council to do. We hope that we will be able to open this window of opportunity, and we urge the Council members to support the minimum requirements included in this draft resolution.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (spoke in Chinese): In recent days, violent clashes once again have

exploded between Israel and Palestine. We condemn the fact that the Israeli army once again besieged Ramallah and has destroyed Chairman Arafat's headquarters, thus directly endangering his safety and security.

We demand that the Israeli side put an immediate end to this siege of Chairman Arafat and ensure his dignity, as well as his safety and security. We also condemn the incidence of suicide bombings within Israel. We call on both Israel and Palestine to exercise restraint, stop responding to violence with more violence and collaborate with the mediation efforts of the international community.

During the recent vicious cycle of violence, both Israel and Palestine suffered terrible losses, especially Palestine, where the humanitarian situation has become extremely serious. The Israeli authorities put blind faith in force. However, their excessive, violent retaliation has not obtained peace and security for Israel. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict also demonstrates that to put an end to violence and to promote the peace process in the Middle East, the active participation of international community is indispensable.

Not long ago the Arab League Summit adopted and endorsed a peace proposal for the Middle East put forward by Saudi Arabia. Recently the Quartet put forward a three-phase, three-stage plan. The reform and election in Palestine have also been put on the agenda. All of these developments are positive, but we also see that the vicious cycle of violence between Israel and Palestine has not been broken.

Without an end to violence, the reform in Palestine cannot continue, and all the road maps and programmes for the settlement of the problem between Israel and Palestine will become mere dead letters. Therefore, the international community must exert greater efforts, and the Security Council should shoulder its responsibilities all the more.

The Chinese Government attaches importance to peace and stability in the Middle East and hopes to see an early easing of the conflict between Israel and Palestine. In order further to participate in and promote the peace process in the Middle East, the Chinese Government has already designated a special envoy on the question of the Middle East. We will strengthen contacts and consultations with all parties concerned

and make unremitting efforts for the realization of peace in the Middle East.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The situation around the Palestinian territories continues to deteriorate and is threatening to get out of control. The large-scale terrorist acts in Israel were followed by harsh action by the Israeli army against the residence of the head of the Palestinian National Authority, Yasser Arafat, in Ramallah. Now, in response to that, currently there are mass protest demonstrations under way in the Palestinian territories. In clashes with the Israeli troops in Ramallah, Tulkarem and Nablus, there are dead and wounded.

All of this happened at the very moment when a drop in the level of violence in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict was being noted. It happened when there were prospects for emerging from the crisis on the basis of the proposals agreed by the Quartet of international mediators in New York on 17 September. Their proposals had been supported by the Security Council.

The extremist forces are not interested in a settlement of the conflict in the Middle East. They want to undermine the situation again and thrust the Palestinians and the Israelis into another spiral of bloodshed and confrontation. It is extremely important not to let the opponents of the peace process achieve their goals. We would strongly urge both sides not to yield to the emotions and provocations of the extremists, not to allow the unfolding of this scenario of violence.

Last weekend the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Igor Ivanov, had telephone conversations with the head of the Palestinian National Authority, Yasser Arafat; Shimon Peres, the Deputy Prime Minister of Israel; Amre Moussa, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States; the United States Secretary of State; the Foreign Ministers of Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Denmark; the United Nations Secretary-General; and Mr. Javier Solana, the High Representative of the European Union. They exchanged views about what steps should be taken to resolve this crisis.

Russia is convinced that it is now extremely important to do everything possible to achieve an immediate halt to the violence. It is important to end the blockade and the destruction of the headquarters of the head of the Palestinian National Authority, and to

give the Palestinian Authority some real possibility of introducing order into the territory, first of all by halting extremist attacks and arresting persons guilty of terrorist acts.

At this critical moment, it is important to make use of all existing mechanisms to swiftly stabilize the situation. It is necessary to make use of the potential of the Security Council, of international mediators and of key Middle Eastern countries in order to halt this escalation of the conflict and clear the way for negotiations on the basis of what the Quartet has agreed upon, which opens the way to a comprehensive settlement based on the resolutions of the Security Council. Today, those resolutions are not being implemented.

The Security Council must respond to this challenge to its authority. We must actively and firmly seek to achieve an immediate halt to this absolutely unacceptable development of the situation in the Palestinian territories, which is a real threat to peace and security.

Russia, as a permanent member of the Security Council, will be guided by those principles in considering the draft resolution that will be introduced in the Council.

Mr. Mahbubani (Singapore): When the Secretary-General spoke to us earlier this morning, he ended with this sentence: "Let us rebuild a centre that can hold" (*supra*). I think he was referring to the rebuilding of a centre in the Middle East, but his remarks might apply to the Security Council as well, which, as we know, has not often been united on the Middle East question. We also need to rebuild a centre within the Security Council.

One practical suggestion we have is that it might be useful to review the many thoughtful statements the Secretary-General has made on the Middle East question, including the one he made today. If we use his statements as a basis for action, then I think we can rebuild the centre we need in this Council.

Speaking now in my national capacity, I note that, as the fourteenth speaker, we will probably repeat or endorse many of the points that have been made so far, but some of them are worth repeating. We will make five points.

The first point is that Singapore deplores in the strongest terms all acts of violence and terror that

target civilians, and it calls for an end to extreme acts by both sides. The Israeli forces must stop their frequent military incursions into Palestinian cities and, as virtually every other speaker has said, its siege of Ramallah. At the same time, the Palestinian Authority must undertake resolute efforts to put a stop to the suicide bombings and other acts of terror against the Israeli population. In this regard, we welcome the categorical condemnation by the Palestinian Authority of the recent spate of suicide bombings.

The second point we would like to make is that, like several other speakers, we would like to strongly support the efforts of the Quartet. Indeed, it is hard to believe it was only three days ago that Mr. Terje Roed-Larsen came here and briefed us on the significant progress made by the Quartet.

It is also noteworthy that the latest Quartet meeting included consultations with the Foreign Ministers of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Syria, as representatives of the Arab League follow-up committee, as well as representatives of Israel and the Palestinian Authority. At the same time, the Quartet spelled out detailed and specific time lines and targets within the three-phase road map. It is also significant that the Quartet has decided to set up a third-party mechanism to monitor and assess progress in the three phases; the assessments will be strictly based on the parties' compliance with specific performance benchmarks. We look forward to receiving more details as the Quartet develops its monitoring and assessment mechanism.

One point we wanted to make to the Quartet was that we hope that as the Quartet carries out its work it will bear in mind that it must also deliver results, because if the Quartet describes its plan of action without delivering results, our fear is that this process too may be damaged.

Our third point is that we hope the international community, as well as the Quartet, will not be held hostage by the actions of extremists on both sides who are clearly determined to disrupt the peace process. In this difficult moment we should not lose sight of the larger process, which, as Mr. Roed-Larsen pointed out to us, must be based on the parallel pursuit of the various humanitarian, security, political tracks, as well as on reciprocity.

The fourth point we would like to raise relates to the humanitarian dimension, which, as several speakers

have said, is extremely important. Mr. Roed-Larsen gave us statistics on how bad the humanitarian situation is currently. We support immediate relief efforts to alleviate the humanitarian crisis, including implementation of the recommendations made by Ms. Catherine Bertini, the Secretary-General's Personal Humanitarian Envoy. Israel's obligations under international law are clear: it must allow and facilitate immediate access by humanitarian agencies to mount emergency rescue operations in the affected areas.

My fifth and final point is that we continue to believe that the situation demands the continued and sustained engagement of the Security Council. Again, as virtually every speaker has said, the best way of addressing the situation is through implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002), 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002). Each of those resolutions came about through painful negotiations. Their words were carefully chosen, and we have them before us. Our challenge is to implement them.

Again, as other speakers have said, long term progress depends on the political will of both sides to move beyond short-term security measures to the broad vision set out in resolution 1397 (2002) where two States, Israel and Palestine, live side by side within secure and recognized borders.

We also believe that the Arab peace initiative adopted at the Beirut Arab Summit offers a historic opportunity that should not be squandered.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a statement in my national capacity.

Bulgaria supports the statement that will be delivered by the representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union. I would like to make a few additional comments. Bulgaria stands up indignantly against this new cycle of violence in the Middle East. We unambiguously condemn the acts of terror and violence that have caused the death of innocent civilians and the destruction of homes and other property.

Bulgaria condemns terrorist acts in Israel, in particular those that took place in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. At the same time, we deplore the decision taken by the Israeli Government to isolate President Arafat. These acts are causing a crisis in the Middle East and leading to a new vicious circle whose hostages are both

the Israeli and Palestinian peoples. We insist that those acts of violence, including the killing of innocent civilians, cease immediately. Bulgaria appeals to the Palestinian Authority to redouble its efforts to stop all terrorist acts and suicide bombings. They are directed against the national interests of the Palestinian people, the establishment of the Palestinian State and peace. The fight against terrorism and security measures must be aimed at establishing lasting peace, rather than at encouraging another cycle in this conflict.

What the Israeli army is doing in Ramallah and at President Arafat's headquarters is unacceptable. Those acts and policies do not help put an end to terrorism. In fact, they encourage extremists and impede reform of the Palestinian Authority and the establishment of lasting peace in the Middle East. Therefore, we call upon Israel to end the siege immediately. What is important now is to create a true atmosphere of security in the region that could promote direct contacts between the parties. From that standpoint, we are encouraged by information we have received in the past few hours reporting direct contact between Israelis and Palestinians.

Bulgaria welcomes in particular the statement made by Mr. Hani al-Hasan, a member of the Fatah Central Committee, stating that Palestine is seeking peace with Israel and that "the Palestinians seek peaceful coexistence and partnership and are prepared to create mutual security".

We welcome with satisfaction the Fatah pledge to prevent attacks against Israeli civilians and we call on the other Palestinian groups to speak out in favour of that initiative. At the same time, we believe that Fatah's appeal for a strike in Gaza to show solidarity with the besieged does not foster a climate of partnership to help create a climate of security. This is the right time to emphasize the importance Bulgaria attaches to resolving the humanitarian crisis that the Palestinian people are experiencing. We support unreservedly the conclusions reached by Ms. Bertini in her report and consider it a matter of urgency that the right balance be struck between Israel's security requirements, on one hand, and, on the other hand, the need to put an end to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in the occupied territories.

My country calls on both parties to sit down at the negotiating table, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1397 (2002), which envisages

peaceful coexistence between two States, Israel and Palestine.

This morning, the Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, has rightly spoken of the absence of hope in the Middle East. The absence of hope is real on the Israeli side, where the Israelis feel their security continuously threatened, and on the Palestinian side, where the Palestinians do not see an end to occupation. In that context, the Quartet and its adopted road map, a real peace plan, provides a real hope. Bulgaria supports unreservedly the Quartet's New York statement of 17 September 2002, and we insist that both parties work together to achieve a lasting and peaceful solution before 2005.

I conclude by reiterating my country's appeal for greater political judgement and greater compromise by both sides. We reaffirm our determination to give our full support to all those who seek peace and security in the Middle East.

I now resume my function as President of the Security Council.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Egypt. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): In a few days, the third year of the intifada of the Palestinian people will begin. This week, the occupied Palestinian territories witnessed an escalation in the brutal violence being perpetrated by the Israeli occupation forces. It witnessed the destruction and siege of the headquarters of the Palestinian President, Yasser Arafat. That violence, which has gone on for the past six weeks, comes at a time when the Palestinian people, in all their groupings and factions, have exercised self-restraint, hoping to achieve real détente, leading to a quieting of the situation in general, thus opening the way to serious negotiations for the two parties to achieve peace. Everyone has taken note of the Palestinian self-restraint, which has continued for six weeks — not just seven days — despite the ongoing operations and acts of violence and oppression by the Israeli army during that prolonged period.

The world has witnessed the ongoing killing of Palestinian civilians. We have all heard with amazement and anger many statements by Israeli officials, not about peace efforts, ending confrontation and returning to constructive dialogue, but ecstatic

repetitions of their visions of the coming full victory over all Palestinians, breaking their will and extinguishing the torch of Palestinian resistance.

Unfortunately, there are trends in Israel that envisage that military action, the use of force, killing, siege, starvation and destruction of the human and economic infrastructures of the Palestinian society will achieve their objective through domination and continuation of the occupation.

However, we would like to tell them very clearly that they will fail. We reject their policies and actions and advise them to learn from the lessons of history and of resistance against occupation and colonialism. This resistance cannot be broken. Violence can only lead to violence.

Here we would like to say clearly to the people of Israel that they cannot overcome the will of the Palestinians to resist occupation, regardless of Israel's military might or equipment or its oppressive policies. On the contrary, Israel's actions will only lead to more pain and suffering for both parties. This state of affairs will continue until Israel recognizes that goodwill, negotiations, a return to trust and an end to the occupation are the key to stability, peace and security.

A hand covered in Palestinian blood has raised the Israeli flag over the headquarters of the Palestinian leader, thereby challenging not only the will of the Palestinian people but that of the international community as a whole and the norms of international law. The Palestinian people will take this flag down.

Egypt, which along with the rest of the international community has condemned all forms of violence against civilians on both sides, cannot but condemn Israel's actions against the headquarters of President Arafat. We call on Israel to put an end to all oppressive practices that harm the Palestinian people and their national leadership.

Security cannot be achieved through arrogant and indiscriminate use of force. True, stable and lasting security can be achieved only through a peace that is based on justice and on respect for the rights of others.

Egypt reiterates that peace between the Israeli and the Palestinian peoples can be achieved only if Israel refrains from acts of aggression and withdraws from the occupied Palestinian territories to the line of 4 June 1967, and if a Palestinian State is established, with East Jerusalem as its capital. This is the path to

peace, security and stability in the Middle East and the path to relations of good-neighbourliness and cooperation.

The international community, represented in the Council, is called on today to shoulder its responsibility to put an end to the tragedy that is tearing apart the Holy Land. It must enforce international humanitarian law and facilitate the return of both sides to the negotiating table. This would help to open the way towards the desired settlement.

One of the basic steps we deem important and necessary is the provision of international protection for the Palestinian people in a manner decided on by the international community.

I wish to make one last, important point, which concerns the manner in which the Council has been dealing with the situation prevailing in the occupied territories and the actions of the occupying Power. In our opinion, the Council has been merely witnessing the events of the past few days, as if this matter did not concern it or as if these events were taking place on another planet. The Council must intervene to remedy the situation and to put an end to the actions of the occupying Power. If it does not, its failure to act will send a dangerous signal to all those who have put their trust in international law and in the role of the United Nations in today's world.

The President (*spoke in French*): I welcome Mr. Reaz Rahman, State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Rahman (Bangladesh): As we speak here this morning, President Arafat is under siege, with Israeli tanks destroying his headquarters and surrounding what remains of them.

It is a matter of grave concern, because the latest Israeli military aggression threatens President Arafat, elected leader of a nation, Nobel Laureate for peace and embodiment of the Palestinian cause.

It is a matter of extreme anxiety, because the policy pursued by Tel Aviv seems to be aimed at destroying not only the physical infrastructure of the Palestinian Authority, but also the entire edifice of peace constructed through Oslo and Madrid.

It is outrageous that Israel continues to flout resolutions of the Security Council with virtual

impunity. The Geneva Conventions are being wilfully ignored. All norms and mores of international law are being breached.

Israel forced a large percentage of Palestinians out of their homes and confined them to refugee camps or forced them into diaspora. For several decades, the people of Palestine have been subject to massacres, to deportation, to daily humiliation, to systematic persecution.

More than a generation of Palestinians has seen nothing but occupation, bombings, missiles, incursions, demolitions, killings, arrests and humiliation. No other nation on earth has suffered so much for so long.

Today, in a sinister reversal of values, the people of Palestine are criminalized for their resistance, for their struggle for self-determination and for claiming their inalienable right to return to ancestral hearths. Yet the free world was supposed to uphold the principles of the Charter — the values of justice, democracy and international law — that constitute the norms of our civilization.

Suicide bombings are used as pretexts for attacks on the Palestinian Authority. Despite President Arafat's public and unequivocal condemnation of such acts.

The Palestinian Authority cannot be held responsible for these individual actions. Experience has amply demonstrated that the security of Israeli civilians is enhanced neither by retaliation, nor by destroying the Palestinian institutions.

Just the other day, the Quartet issued a communiqué. It reiterates the fundamental principles of a comprehensive settlement. It proposes a calendar. It asks Israel to release its stranglehold of the Palestinian economy. Obviously, the Quartet plan can be executed only if Israel is engaged in the peace process.

Bangladesh welcomed the initiative for an international peace conference. We urged its early convening. To arrest the despair and desperation there must be a process; there must be a prospect in view. We must deny the extremists a reason. We must not allow a void. As we have insisted on earlier occasions, the Security Council should revisit the Secretary-General's proposal for an international force, in favour of which there have been indisputable arguments.

The response must be sought in the root-causes; not by trying to make *la loi des plus forts* prevail. The practice of that law has resulted in wars among nations, bloodshed and denial of all civilized norms. The Security Council should act to prevent imposition of that law.

Resolving the conflict will require courage — courage to recognize the truth and courage to defend it, courage to confront the demand of justice and courage to uphold the principles of this Organization. The path to justice, and to peace, was laid down in Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1978). A meaningful beginning could be the implementation of the Security Council's own resolutions, namely, 1397 (2002) and 1402 (2002).

The Bangladesh Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia has strongly condemned the Israeli attack on the Palestinian Headquarters in Ramallah and has expressed grave concern for the security and safety of President Arafat. She has also said that Israel would be solely responsible should any harm befall the Palestinian leaders.

The Security Council needs to secure Israeli compliance with its resolutions, to have its forces withdraw from Palestinian territories and to end its aggression against the people of Palestine. The Security Council must act. It must act to meet its Charter responsibility. It must act to save the people of Palestine from a perpetual war waged against a people. It must act to preserve its credibility and moral authority.

The President (*spoke in French*): I intend to give the floor to one more speaker before suspending the meeting. The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of South Africa. I invite her to take a seat at the Council table and to make her statement.

Ms. Ndlovu (South Africa): During the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly, speaker after speaker has stressed the need for full and unconditional compliance with Security Council resolutions. The Foreign Ministers of the 115 member States of the Non-Aligned Movement also called on all States to abide by Security Council resolutions. They pointed out that if the Security Council's resolutions are not enforced, the very legitimacy and credibility of the United Nations is threatened. Furthermore, they called for conflict situations to be addressed multilaterally, through the United Nations.

We are meeting here today in response to the Israeli military onslaught on the headquarters of the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah. This is the same Israeli military force that the Security Council ordered to withdraw six months ago. Israel has yet to comply with Security Council resolutions that call for the withdrawal of its forces from Palestinian towns and cities.

The life of President Arafat, the elected leader of the Palestinian people, is under threat. Once again, President Arafat's condemnation of the attacks against Israel, which he regards as both morally unacceptable and counter-productive to the Palestinian cause, has fallen on deaf Israeli government ears. It seems that there is a blind impulse towards violence and vengeance that prevails over the logic of dialogue and peace. More innocent civilians continue to die. We unreservedly condemn the killing of civilians, whether they are Israelis or Palestinians.

The sense of despair, frustration and hopelessness in the Middle East is brought about by the occupation and by the fact that no land has been returned in exchange for peace as required by Security Council resolutions. For too long, Israel has ignored the decisions of both the Security Council and the General Assembly. Israel continues to illegally occupy Palestinian lands, settlements continue to expand at an alarming rate and extrajudicial executions, arbitrary arrests and the destruction of private Palestinian homes, farms and institutions continue unabated. Israel routinely violates even the most basic provisions of international humanitarian law and the Fourth Geneva Convention and has yet to withdraw its forces as required by Security Council resolutions 1402 (2002) and 1403 (2002) and General Assembly resolution ES-10/11. Israel also continues to illegally occupy Syrian and Lebanese territory and to violate the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon.

The draft resolution being circulated seeks to address the fundamental requirements for the resumption of a meaningful political process that would lead to a comprehensive solution of the Middle East crisis. It is in line with the Arab peace plan and the recommendations of the Quartet. For any lasting peace in the Middle East to take hold, the Israeli military must withdraw immediately to the positions held prior to September 2000 and all acts of violence, including military acts; destruction and terror must cease immediately.

We call on the Security Council to immediately adopt this resolution. As the Non-Aligned Movement Ministers made clear, the Security Council must ensure the implementation of all its resolutions. Otherwise, its credibility will be undermined.

The President (*spoke in French*): The brevity of the statement by the representative of South Africa allows me to give the floor to two further representatives. The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Jordan, whom I invite to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Al-Husseini (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): First, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month and wish you every success in your presidency. I must also extend my thanks to your predecessor, Mr. John Negroponte, the Ambassador of the United States, for his efforts during his presidency of the Council last month.

It is regrettable that we are meeting to discuss once again the Israeli practices against the Palestinian Authority and people, which have been continuing since our last meeting in July 2002. Israel is still attempting to subjugate the Palestinian Authority and has been practising all forms of violence against the Palestinian people, arbitrary sieges, closures and curfews, ever since it reoccupied the Palestinian territories in September 2000.

We support and welcome the progress that has been achieved during the past few weeks, particularly the Gaza-Bethlehem agreement, and we viewed with great hope the calm that prevailed while international efforts were made to bring the peace process back to its right track. We call on all parties to commit themselves to the results of the last meeting of the Quartet, held in New York a few days ago, which resulted in a plan of action and a timetable to realize the American vision of establishing two States living side by side in peace with an independent Palestinian State established within the borders of 4 June 1967, and to put an end to the Israeli occupation of all Palestinian and Arab territories. At the same time, we strongly condemn all acts by Israel to undermine the political process and to escalate the situation, particularly the recent military acts against the headquarters of the Palestinian Authority and president Yasser Arafat. I would also like to reiterate my country's position of condemning all forms of suicide attacks against Israeli civilians,

which are used as a pretext by certain groups to hinder international efforts to revive the peace process. We believe that those acts are perpetrated not only against Israeli civilians but against all the peoples of the region who wish to live in security and who want a comprehensive and just peace.

We would also like to reiterate that Israel's practices and its siege of the Palestinian Authority have weakened the Palestinian side's ability to shoulder its responsibilities. We therefore call upon all the parties concerned to enable the Palestinian Authority to rebuild its security institutions in order to carry out its duties.

We call on all parties concerned to bring calm to the situation, to exercise self-restraint and to shoulder their responsibilities to support the efforts made by the Quartet and the brotherly Arab countries to bring the peace process back to its right track, based on the Madrid terms of reference, Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 1397 (2002) and the Arab peace initiative.

The President (*spoke in French*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Turkey, whom I invite to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Pamir (Turkey): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the Security Council in a fairly critical period and, as the representative of our neighbour and close friend, Bulgaria, we wish you every success in your efforts. Our warm thanks also go to Ambassador Negroponte, the representative of the United States, which held the presidency of the Council during the month of August.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Denmark on behalf of the European Union. Likewise, we fully subscribe to the eloquent speech delivered this morning by Mr. Kofi Annan. The wisdom of his words should inspire us all.

We are gathered here today after a six-week period of relative calm in Israel, which was undermined by the two brutal suicide attacks of last week on Israelis in Umm el-Fahm and Tel Aviv and by the bomb planted at a Palestinian school in Hebron. We extend our deepest condolences to the bereaved families of the victims. We are dismayed to see that the tension in the Middle East grows and the situation in

the Palestinian territories deteriorates as the siege in and around the compound of the President of the Palestinian Authority, Yasser Arafat, continues. All these remind us of the desperate days of the vicious cycle of violence.

Turkey strongly and unequivocally condemns all acts of terror and violence. We reiterate our firm stance that there is no justification for any such actions under any pretext. Terror and violence lead nations to darkness and misery and only help kill the hopes of their future generations. Fighting terrorism is not only a sovereign right of States but also a moral obligation incumbent upon each and every member of the international community. In this respect, we welcome the call of President Arafat to the Palestinian people and to all other parties to halt any violent attacks inside Israel.

Turkey deeply regrets the morally repugnant suicide attacks targeting civilians and deplores that Israel has once again used harsh military measures in the Palestinian cities, in particular in Ramallah. We are gravely concerned at the Israeli actions in and around the Muqata'a, the headquarters of President Arafat, who is the elected leader of the Palestinian people. Here, we call upon the Israeli Government to put an immediate end to reoccupation. We urge the Israeli Government to stop destruction in the Palestinian cities, which serves only to aggravate the dire and strained humanitarian conditions of the civilian Palestinian population. Indeed, a more forthcoming attitude from Israel towards its Palestinian counterparts would brighten political prospects.

In this vein, we call upon the leadership of Israel to think over the possible consequences that isolating Mr. Arafat might have on the ongoing Palestinian reforms in particular, and the fragile peace process, in general.

The rise in tensions amid the siege, suicide bombings and street protests have further damaged hopes of ending two years of violence, which has taken a heavy toll on innocent lives, most of them Palestinians. We wish to hope that the opponents of durable peace in the Middle East will not be given another opportunity to undermine the intensified efforts of the international community towards achieving a final settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on the common vision of two States, Israel and an independent, viable and democratic Palestine, living side by side in peace and security.

Turkey supports all efforts, including those of the Quartet, towards this end and as a regional facilitator is ready to provide its assistance in whatever way may be necessary. Finally, we wish to encourage all parties to assume their responsibilities to seek a just and comprehensive settlement of the conflict based on Security Council resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 1397 (2002), along with the Madrid terms of reference, the principle of land for peace and the implementation of all existing agreements between the parties.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the representative of Turkey for his kind words addressed to me.

The meeting was suspended at 1 15 p.m.

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Security Council

Fifty-seventh year

Provisional

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Corrigendum

Page 16, first column, third line from bottom

For Bengalese issue read Middle East issue

